

# The Cult of Saint Martin



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AD 316 – 397

In 1998, having read Christopher Donaldson's book *Martin of Tours, the shaping of Celtic Spirituality*, I was fortunate to meet the author and his wife living in retirement near Crewkerne in Somerset. The Reverend Christopher Donaldson was formerly vicar of St Martin's church at Canterbury, which was Queen Bertha's church when she came to Britain to marry King Ethelbert, the Saxon king.

During the second world war my school, also called 'Queen Bertha's', in Birchington near Canterbury in Kent, was evacuated to Llandeilo in Carmarthenshire, South Wales, where our family lived, and so my sister Mary and I joined it there and, after the war, we returned with the school to Birchington. I have a booklet by Christopher Donaldson, written in 1966, which describes the church of St Martin as a Roman church, which Queen Bertha repaired, so it is certainly ancient. My mother probably collected this booklet on one of our half-term visits to Canterbury. In contrast however my present book has taken me almost a lifetime to produce!

Marmoutier in France, the origin of Saint Martin's cult, cannot have changed very much since his time, and one can still see the caves in the cliff beyond the church, to which Martin and his monks would retreat. Martin was born in Hungary in 316, baptised at the early age of ten, becoming a soldier in the Roman army from the age of 15 until he was 40. He was in short to spend most of his early life in garrisons at the frontiers. His story includes the giving of half his cloak to a poor beggar; later that night he had a vision in a dream of Christ coming toward him, wearing the beggar's half of the cloak and saying, 'Martin, the catechumen put this clothing on me.' This vision stayed with him all his life. I quote from Christopher Donaldson:- "In 356 he withdrew from the army to be near Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, one of the greatest bishops of his time. Hilary was exiled a few weeks later because of his stance on Arianism (Arianism rejects the divinity of Christ, and differentiates between the nature of the Father and the Son). Hilary was one of the bishops of Gaul, who were against Arianism, which dominated the church of his time. Martin left also and went to Milan to try to convert his parents, and perhaps his much younger sister Consuessa as well, but also to combat the Arians in Illyricum and Milan. He had to hide and live as a hermit near Milan, then on an island, Gallinaria (on the Liguge coast). In 361 he returned to Poitiers on Hilary's return from exile, and lived for 10 years at Liguge as a hermit. He wished to live as a monk, living with 80 followers in the caves at Marmoutier, a place of solitude and in the desert".<sup>i</sup>

A guide book, obtained on a visit to Marmoutier, continues the story - 'It was the first attempt at monastic life in Gaul, and the first seminary, where the seed was sown for the emergence of many abbots and bishops. Under Martin a new type of sanctity began. Martin came just after the time of persecution, where martyrdom of men and women was the way for them to witness to their faith.

He was a confessor, who witnessed by the way he lived; by his miracles and his exceptional lifestyle; poverty, uninterrupted prayer, charity and personal contact with God, through his vision and by his struggles with Satan'.<sup>ii</sup>

At the time of his death there were 80 monks at Marmoutier, and in practice many more in other small monasteries which he founded. He died at Candès, 8<sup>th</sup> November 397, to be buried at Tours on 11<sup>th</sup> November 397. There were no less than 2,000 monks at his funeral. A short biography may help.

## Martin of Tours, 305 – 397. <sup>iii</sup>

305 Constantine proclaimed Emperor in York. 314 Constantine summoned the Council of Arles. 316 Martin was born at Szombathely in Hungary. 319 Martin's parents moved to Italy, twenty miles from Milan at Ticinum. 325 Constantine summoned the Council of Nicaea. 326 Martin enrolled as a catechumen aged 10. 331 Martin aged fifteen is forcibly enlisted in the Roman army. 336 Martin aged twenty has a vision of Christ wearing Martin's military

cloak.

355 Constantine forces bishops to sign the Arian creed.

356 Martin aged forty, serving in the army at Worms under Julian, leaves to

join Hilary at Poitiers.

371 Martin elected Bishop of Tours.

378 In Rome Pope Damasus consecrated Ninian.

382 Martin sent Patrick's grandfather, the priest Potitus, and Deacon Calpurnius, who was married to Martin's sister Consuessa as missionaries to the Isle of Man.

383 On his return from visiting St Jerome, Ninian visits Martin.

385 Birth of St Patrick in Britain (in the Isle of Man?) Elen and Magnus Maximus lunched at Tours with Martin aged 69, no doubt bringing news of his nephew Patrick's birth.

387 Magnus Maximus invades Italy.

392 Pagan revival in Rome. Martin sent Ninian to Whithorn.

394 His biographer, Sulpitius Severus aged eighty-one, visited Martin. The battle of the river Frigidus. Final victory of Catholic Christianity.

395 Sulpitius writes and publishes *The Life of Martin*.

397 Saint Martin died at Candés, 8<sup>th</sup> November to be buried at Tours, 11<sup>th</sup> November. <sup>iv</sup> 431 Ninian died and Patrick began his mission to Ireland.

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I would like to thank Adrian for all his support and help over several years.

## **Synopsis**

St Martin of Tours pioneered the Celtic Christian movement in Wales from c400 AD, followed by the Saxon invasion in 410 AD.

Until c539-652 Queen Bertha the Christian came from Tours to marry the pagan King Ethelbert of Kent to convert Kent, Northumbria and Mercia through marriages of her Christian family.

Finally, King Alfred some years later called Asser from St Davids, to reveal to the later period what had occurred.

King Hywel the Good – Hywel Dda.

## Introduction

### Wales in the wider Celtic Context & St Martin 305-397

- 383 - 388 Magnus Maximus a Roman Emperor from Spain married Elen of Wales, who lived and ruled Wales, from north Wales at Caernarfon. He took her to Rome. She visited St Martin whilst passing through Gaul. (Rev. Christopher Donaldson. *'The shaping of Celtic Spirituality - St Martin of Tours'*.)
- 385 – 461 St Patrick, of Man (according to Dr Raleigh Radford). His mother was St Martin's sister, and it was the church in Gaul which supported and inspired the Celtic missionary effort in the British Isles.

#### Scotland

360 – 431 Ninian 360 – 431 founded Candida Casa Whithorn

398 Founded by St Ninian. Candida Casa (The White House), or 'the Shining place' (A.R. Paterson *'Celtic Saga'*). Ninian trained at Rome, and later under Martin of Tours. Enormous extent of remains, the earliest dating to 400 CE. Whithorn became a famous seat of learning. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century scholars throughout the Celtic world came to train here. Missionary monks went out to other parts of Scotland.

**Ireland** Patrick 385 – 461. 5<sup>th</sup> century Five main tribes evangelised by St Patrick, although he was not the first, e.g. Palladius before him. Patrick, Romano-British, lived c 385 - 461 CE. Probably born Isle of Man, both his father and grandfather were Christians, serving in the Romano-British church. Trained under St Germanus of Auxerre, who twice came to Britain (429- 440) to put down Pelagianism.

6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> century The Irish church continued to grow throughout the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. (Patrick's influence on South Wales via his sister's family).

#### The Church in Wales

A Christian province together with Devon, Cornwall and 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Brittany under the overall charge of St Dubricius, whose main <sup>centuries</sup> monastery was at Henllan (Weston under Penyard today). Dubricius trained St Teilo to be his successor.

6<sup>th</sup> century

Saint Teilo founded Llandeilo Fawr (Fawr means great). Saint David a cousin and contemporary, viz: St David's Menevia.

Some Saints

Saint Padarn a contemporary, Llanbadarn Fawr. Saint Germanus or 'Garmon' and Saint Deiniol, north Wales. Saint Cadoc in the south-east Wales, viz.: at Llancarfan. Many thousands of others also throughout Wales and Brittany.

**GOSPEL BOOK WRITTEN BY ST PAULINUS** near the Gold Mines at of 'Teilo' or Maesllanurthwal, his brother's monastery near Caio, 'Chad' or Llandoverly. David, Teilo and Aidan are mentioned amongst his 'Lichfield'. pupils here by Rhigyfach. Also Lupus of Auxerre and others Paulinus the were here. Scribe wrote this

547 The Yellow Pestilence threatened the whole of Wales. <sup>Book.</sup> Under the organisation of St Teilo everyone who could, fled to At the Synod of Brittany for <sup>Llandewi Brefi</sup> 'Seven years and seven months.' This was the opportunity that <sup>545 AD,</sup> the Saxons were looking for, King Ethelbert of Kent and King <sup>Paulinus's severe</sup> Ida of Northumberland pushed their kingdoms westwards.

eye trouble was cured by St David.

**Iona**

Aidan was copying a Book which had been shipped to Ireland

521-597

from Rome. As a punishment Aidan was sent to Iona. Iona was a sacred island of the Druids, before the coming of Saint Columba in 563, in his 42<sup>nd</sup> year, he and his twelve companions landed on Iona.

Columba lived from 521-597, trained in Ireland at Moville, later Leinster. He completed his studies at Clonard.

### **The Northumbrian Church**

547

Ida, the English King of Northumbria, founded the church at the same time as Teilo was taking his people to Brittany to escape the Yellow Pestilence. Urien the British King fought Ida, to be locked up by the English at Lindisfarne for 3 days and nights. His son, Saint Kentigern, became the well-known missionary of Cumbria, where Urien ruled.

547

King Edwin (reigned 616-633), son of Aethelfrith, married Queen Bertha's daughter as his Christian



wife, Ethelberga of Kent. Edwin & Ethelberga's daughter was Eanfled.

625

Edwin k. Northumbria was defeated by pagans of Mercia, allied to the British of Gwynedd under Cadfan's son Cadwallon

who was trying to regain his own inheritance which Edwin had

stolen. Oswald b.c604 (reigned 634-642) brought the two Northumbrian kingdoms together. Bede regarded Oswald as a saintly king. As a boy he was brought up at Iona.

633 Oswald, Aethelfrith's son, was exiled to Iona, but returns as King and sends for Aidan to convert Northumbria to Christianity.

### **Lindisfarne**

634 Founded by Aidan from Iona, to convert the Northumbrians, close to the Royal Palace at Yeavinger. Lindisfarne Gospels are begun <sup>651</sup> 634? by Aidan? However his evangelical mission now took primary importance as Bishop. **He died in AD 651.** Aidan trained Hild who became Abbess of Whitby. Brothers Chad, Cedd, Cynebil and Caelin trained at Lindisfarne.

664 664 The Synod of Whitby, when the Churches decided to choose the control of the Roman church instead of the Celtic Church. <sup>(698-720?)</sup> Eadfrith finally produced these Gospels before becoming <sup>LINDISFARNE</sup> Bishop of Lindisfarne? (Traditional date of the Lindisfarne Gospels is c720) <sup>GOSPELS</sup>

**Jarrow** Bede (673-735) started in Monkswearmouth as a small pupil; later his master took him to Jarrow to found a small church, St Paul's, where he remained for the rest of his life and began writing c710.

**Whitby** Hilda (614 - 680) of the Royal House was born in exile,

664 Cuthbert sending her as Abbess of the Celtic Abbey of Whitby until at the Synod of Whitby in 664 when it went over to the Roman Church.

This present book is a continuation of my interest in Celtic Christianity, together with a request from my church, Holy Trinity Roehampton, and also Queen Bertha's School, to explain how St Martin's missionary work was not only the inspiration for Wales, but also for England, through the Christian Queen Bertha, who married the Saxon King Ethelbert to bring forth many descendants.

## **In short therefore**

**This is about Christian history in Britain from c400 to c1000 AD.**

(In Wales we know that Christianity had arrived much earlier from the Mediterranean via the seaways, so that by c500 Welsh Christianity reached the monastic stage. St Martin of Tours pioneered the Celtic Christian movement in Wales from c400 to c700AD.

The Saxon insurgence began in 410 AD, and brought pagans from the continent to the eastern shores of Britain via the Anglo-Saxon tribes, to run riot over what we call England. After them came the Danes, and still later Vikings invaded around the entire coastline of Britain, until Queen Bertha, the Christian, came from Tours to marry the pagan King Ethelbert of Kent to convert Kent, Northumbria and Mercia through marriages of her Christian family.

Finally, King Alfred some years later contacted the learned priests of St Davids, and called Asser to reveal what had actually occurred.

St Aidan and St David - Rhygyfach Hywel Dda – King Hywel the Good.

## **Some Celtic and Roman elements in the Church of England (and Wales now dis-established).**

To ascertain these we must retrace our steps to the beginning of the Christian story.

It is at least possible that some of the legends concerning our island are true, although of course we have to take our myths and traditions with sensible caution. Glastonbury is indeed a very ancient Christian site. The legends of Joseph of Arimathea and his little party, fleeing from the Holy Land, may well be true, given the frequent trade, and thus personal contacts built over many years in Cornwall and Wales via the seaways. The very Legion of Roman soldiers who guarded St Paul were among the earliest to be sent to Britain, and based at Caerleon. In AD 70 Llandeilo had a huge Roman fort (in the grounds of Dynevor Park today), 2000 men were stationed there, later it was reduced to the normal size of the network of forts all over Wales. The earliest recorded martyrs at Caerleon were Julius and Aaron of Chester - contemporaries of St Alban, AD 206. Aaron's name is interesting because it is an example of the frequent use of Jewish names in Wales even today names such as Melchior is another example - while place names must be included here also, although not to be confused with those Chapel names that sprang up with the Methodist revival.

In the more remote parts of Wales, Christianity was found to have been kept true and safe from the later Roman invaders; Tertullian of Carthage, 208 AD, says that in his time the Christian Church 'extended to all the boundaries of Gaul and parts of Britain inaccessible to the Romans but subject to Christ', and a little later Origen supported this claim. Polydore Vergil, who wrote during the period of Henry VIII's quarrels with the pope, adds 'Britain partly through Joseph of Arimathea, partly through Fugatus and Damianus, was of all kingdoms the first to receive the Gospel'. Nennius also refers to two eminent doctors Faganus and Damianus, who in 185 in the reign of King Lucius (in Welsh, Lleurig Mawr, or 'great light', because of his Christianity) were sent to Britain by Eltheurius, Bishop of Rome 171-185, at the request of Lucius to teach the Gospel.

By the middle of the 4th century AD, Britain was being governed by her native princes and four centuries of Roman occupation were over. However this Romano-British Christianity was almost exclusively in the townships such as they were. The countryside was largely pagan, and untouched by Christianity, but every town of any size had its own bishop at the head of the Christian community.

In monastic times from about 450, Celtic monks would visit Jerusalem (rather than Rome); the monks covering the countryside on foot, while the seaways were still the link between that Celtic church and the East - arrangement of monastic sites being identical to those of the Coptic church and to those in the deserts of north Africa. Such constant traffic thus continued between the East and the Celtic church, which had since Roman times used Latin liturgy and Latin doctrine, but were now cut off from Rome by Rome's 5th century barbarian invaders.

It was in this way that the Orthodox Church thus became very important to Wales.

Egyptian/Coptic art as late as in the Book of Lichfield, (Teilo), Latin however continuing to be used for the script. Coptic papers have been discovered in Ireland.

During the 380s, Magnus Maximus a Roman Emperor of Spanish origin married Elen of Wales, the Christian heiress (Wales was a matriarchal society, with women's right of succession at least equal to men). Elen lived at Caernarfon, but she ruled in the south as well. Before coming to Wales he ruled in Spain; but today one can only visit his Roman camp on the hills above Caernarvon. When Magnus Maximus was assassinated in Rome, she returned to Wales with her sons whom in due course she set to rule throughout Wales. Her brother Emyr Llydaw did not return (from Rome) any further than Brittany, where he was a ruler, and it was thus that the Welsh came to rule there also, the connections still remaining strong today.

## Pelagianism

Soon after this the Briton, Pelagius, set out for Rome, where he gained a reputation as a Christian thinker, his discourses with St Augustine of Hippo being well known on the subject of Pelagianism c420. The argument was about salvation through God's Grace and the death of His son, not as Pelagius believed chiefly through man's efforts. He claimed man was born immature and innocent (rather than with original sin, as St Augustine had argued).

To quote from the introduction to 'Original Blessing' by the Quaker, Matthew Fox, 'With Augustine, Western Christianity with its stress on guilt and introspective achievements caused man to turn in on himself, infatuated and absorbed by the thought, rather than thinking of how God is working in the innermost individual soul ... The introspective conscience is a Western development and a Western plague! ... It reached its theological climax and explosion in Sigmund Freud. But Paul himself did not hold this belief, neither did the Celtic church, and although the Orthodox believe in original sin, they do not emphasise this aspect, and certainly do not emphasise the later Augustinian aspects that have led to guilt. The Roman church was however to follow the rationale of St Augustine, the Orthodox church keeping much more closely to the teachings of the Bishop of Lyons, St Irenaeus (c130-200).

St Patrick, originally of the Isle of Man, may have visited the Glamorganshire monastery at Llantwit Major, he trained in the Roman church in Gaul it is said for thirty years under Germanus of Auxerre until c440, so that he, along with most of the later saints, such as David and Teilo in Wales, held an anti-Pelagian view. The pope sent St Germanus of Auxerre twice to Britain to put down Pelagianism (in 429 and 447 both in Patrick's time). But as already mentioned, the issue continued to be debated right up to the Synod of Llandewi Brefi a century later, when St David made a brilliant anti-Pelagian speech and as a result was proclaimed head of the British church.

The issue of Pelagianism then was chiefly about ‘Original sin’, so that tombstones of the period in Wales in either Latin or Ogham are inscribed either with ‘Filius’ for a non-Christian, or ‘Hic iacit’ for a Christian. (Either ‘son of so and so’, or ‘Here lies so and so’). The significance of this is to be found in the Biblical quotation (Matt 23:9), for they considered earthly parentage a source of original sin, but the Christian had now been saved, through baptism and the Grace of God. ‘Call no man your father on earth, for One is your Father which is in heaven’. These tombstones date from the 5th 7th century. It was rejection of the doctrine of original sin, of which the followers of Pelagius stood accused at this time, but of course Pelagians are still to be found today throughout the Anglican Church and elsewhere.

## **Wales in the wider Celtic Context.**

There were hill forts and religious groups in the Preselly Mountains 5,500 years ago, with connections from west Wales via the seaways to Egypt and the Mediterranean,<sup>v</sup> as well as from the east of Britain with northern Europe from ancient times.

*'Happily, the lack of native information is to some extent supplied by the testimony of three foreign explorers of considerable importance, who found their way, at different times before the Christian era, into Britain, and who reported on its agricultural and mineral resources, as well as on the domestic customs of its early inhabitants. These were Pytheas, Posidonius, and Julius Caesar.*

*A voyage, inaugurated by the Greek merchants of Marseilles for the exploration of Britain in the interests of commerce was conducted by Pytheas, one of the most celebrated geographers of ancient times. The explorers landed in this country about the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The report prepared by Pytheas, though only cursorily recorded by later classical writers, such as Timaeus (B.C. 300), Diodorus Siculus (B.C. 44), Strabo (B.C. 20), Pliny (A.D. 70), Tacitus (A.D. 80), and Minucius Felix (A.D. 210), represents the earliest historical information extant relative to Britain.*

*According to this account, agricultural development seems to have reached an advanced stage, for Pytheas reports having seen abundant cornfields, and sheaves gathered into covered and commodious barns. Bee-keeping, and a beverage made of wheat and honey, fell also under his observation; while 'wheeled-ploughs', and a prepared manure, are recorded, probably on the authority of Pytheas, as having been among the inventions of the British agriculturalists of that age. Mention is also made by Pytheas, of a British Tin industry, and of the conveyance of the ingots by sea in coracles to a point which was regarded as the most convenient for shipment to the continent; the isle of Thanet being the probable place of export.*

*The discovery of these shores by Pytheas seems to have resulted in the establishment of a systematic commerce in tin between the Greek merchants of Marseilles and the south-eastern coast of Britain.'*<sup>vi</sup>



The history of Britain in this early period has remained obscure, especially from about 350AD until 597AD, when Augustine arrived on the island of Thanet on our east coast. It is for this reason that we have come to think of this period as *The Dark Ages*. The monk Bede wrote his history around 750AD, but it is partial and largely concerns the eastern side of the country. However today we are greatly helped to gain the larger picture in those western parts of Britain, through archaeology opening our eyes to what for too long had lain so well hidden.

The advantages we received from the Roman occupation remain revealed today in the network of roads, which in the main they constructed on existing British roads, leading to better communication with forts at regular intervals, whereby law and order could be maintained. Communication with the continent and thereby our nearest neighbours, especially Gaul and Brittany, were to prove an important lifeline. In the east however, as the heathen Saxons invaded, they obliterated much of the memory of civilisation gained from the Roman conquest. However when those armies returned to Rome, to defend it against the invaders from the north, the roads in Britain became far less safe, the seaways again becoming the much safer form of travel. The ruling classes had however gained much from the Roman occupation, including their system of education, language and social refinement. Furthermore it was during this Roman period that Christianity came to Britain. Julius Caesar came in BC 54, but he did not land, and his expedition failed. Agricola, as imperial governor from AD 40 – 93, was however successful, and this time the conquest was thorough; the recent find of a major fort near our Welsh cottage in Llandeilo, built in AD 70 to hold 2000 troops, was especially exciting. Another fort, under one Frontius and his second Legion, also held back the conquered tribe of the Silures in Wales; they were based at Caerleon between AD 74-77, with troops who had earlier guarded St Paul in Rome, many of whom appear to have already become Christian there during his imprisonment. In Wales we have many other legends respecting the introduction of Christianity into Britain – they include no less than the Arimathean Legend, the Bran Legend, St Paul Legend, St Peter Legend, and the Lucian Legend, to be found in books often today out of print, but also again in that of the Revd. D. Daven Jones B.A.<sup>vii</sup>

Here we are entering a minefield however, for we must be wary of these legends. Our problem is as always, that historians are from many ranks – ranging from the fanciful to the realistic – and we have to distinguish between them all. This is a formidable subject since, although much has been discovered, no positive story has yet emerged, and we do not know enough to be sure. I include them here for the interest of the reader.

*The Arimathean Legend* is still quite well known, and claims that Joseph of Arimathea, being Jesus's uncle, was the senior male relative of Jesus's family and thus was given the body after Jesus was crucified, to lay in his own tomb. He had connections with Cornwall through the tin trade, for his shipping fleet was in contact with the tin mines there; thus he brought a group of Christians via Marseilles, fleeing from the Holy land, to shelter there after the crucifixion. There also he built a church at Glastonbury of wattle and daub, the first in Britain.

*The Bran Legend* (from St Paul's time). When Caractacus, known in modern Welsh as Caradoc, was taken prisoner to Rome, tradition asserts that he was accompanied by his father Bran, to whom in Welsh literature is given the epithet 'Fendigaid' or *Blessed*; together with his daughter Gladys and son Linus, they were taken prisoner to Rome, to be incarcerated with St Paul. They lived in detention with St Paul and were all converted to Christianity by St Paul, having access to the Titulus, now the church in Rome known as St Pudentiana.

This family charmed all Rome with their gentle manners and grace. Caractacus was allowed to return home, whilst Bran, Claudia and Linus were held hostage in Rome. Linus was to follow Saint Peter as the second 'pope', while his sister Claudia (known as 'Gwladys', the Welsh for 'princess') married Pudens, a Roman patrician. They were detained, to ensure Caractacus never fought the Romans again, but sadly were to die later as Christian martyrs (2 Tim 4 :21).<sup>viii</sup> *The Bran legend* claims that Bran eventually returned to his Silurian home, accompanied by Aristobulus. Earlier Aristobulus had been sent ahead of Paul to Rome, presumably travelling with his son-in-law Saint Peter. St Paul was later to consecrate him as the first bishop of Britain. Moreover Aristobulus was the brother of Barnabas. Remembering the story

of Jesus's healing of Peter's mother-in-law, one is tempted to think that Aristobulus' conversion dates from this incident. As a disciple, Aristobulus had known and loved Jesus in his earthly life, watched St Peter's remorse at denying Jesus three times during his trial, and was then intimately involved throughout the death and resurrection. Who, therefore, would be the best man to go with Peter, ahead of Paul to Rome, and finally to pave the way for Paul, should he manage to reach Britain?

This is a pattern I am beginning to see emerge throughout our story so far. Someone is found, who is capable and, in deep sincerity, is able to pave the way, albeit in a foreign country, for the reception of the Gospel by the saint who was to follow up the work. On the death of Aristobulus, Ildid, 'a man of Israel', who had gone with Bran and Aristobulus to Wales, took charge, until St Paul arrived.

*(Tacitus does not mention Paul's return to Britain as one would expect)* Although the legend claiming he was the honoured guest of Caradoc in Siluria cannot be proven, classical authors such as Theodoret tell us:- '*St Paul brought help to the isles of the sea*'; Clement of Rome also speaks of the same apostle as having extended his journeys "*to the end of the west.*" Later writers however state that this is too vague, to be sure that he reached Britain.<sup>ix</sup> Although even today rumours still abound, some things we shall never know.

In this Christian story we may discern a pattern beginning to emerge of the fore-runners to the Gospel.

- St John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus's coming;
- St Paul sent Aristobulus (St Peter's father-in-law), ahead of him.
- St Martin of Tours sent Ninian.
- St Germanus was to be put in charge of later Christian mission to Britain.
- Brychan was to found his large family.
- His grandson St Dubricius, was to send that same family throughout Wales and beyond to Brittany to establish the great Age of the Saints.

*The St Peter Legend* claims that Peter came to Britain, where he preached the faith of Christ, set up churches and ordained bishops, priests and deacons, after which he returned to Rome in the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Nero, A.D.66. This is mentioned in the ‘*Acta Sanctorum.*’ (It appears also in a 6<sup>th</sup> century document known as the ‘*Menology of the Greek Church.*’) Incidentally this was the year of Saint Peter’s death, according to the list of Popes given out by the Catholic Church. Curiously also Linus is the second Pope in their list, however his provenance does not appear to be ‘our’ Linus, although he was in Rome at the time. Perhaps this was because they did not wish to say he was British or maybe after the pagan sacking of Rome, they just did not know.<sup>x</sup>

Although Britain is included by Tertullian in his enumeration of the Christian countries at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, it is believed that there was no fully organised Church in this country prior to AD 176, since no mention was made of it by Irenaeus, who tabulated the western churches that year. It is probable that the hierarchy of the British Church was still being founded.

*The Lucian Legend.* Clearly however there was contact with Rome, since the *Lucian Legend* states that ‘*In the year 185, Pope Eleutherius sent hither into Britain, at the instance of the British King Lucius, two eminent doctors, Faganus and Damianus, to the end that they might instruct him and his subjects in the principles of the Christian religion, and consecrate such Churches as had been dedicated to divers false gods, unto the honour of the true God: whereupon these holy men consecrated three metropolitans sees in the three chief cities of the island, unto which they subjected divers bishoprics: the first at London, whereunto all England, from the banks of the Humber southwards, and Severn eastwards, belonged: the second, York, which contained all beyond Humber northwards, together with Scotland: the third, Caerleon (upon Uske), whereunto all westward of Severn, with Wales totally, were subject.*’

In Jesus's time the British inhabited the whole of Britain. Before the Romans landed, we had our own culture, with local rulers such as Boudicca, and our overall king, Caractacus a Silure with his base also at Caerleon. The highest caste, the Druids, were both learned and deeply religious. They not only believed in the immortality of the soul, with an understanding of atonement, but were also expecting Jesus, whom they called 'Jesu' ('Yesi'). There were Bards also, for music was vitally important; Caractacus's daughter Eurgain was to found twelve colleges! Her love for music and excellent talent, both as a musician and a theologian, were also to create our first Christian choirs, along with written hymns, glorious anthems and chants in praise. She devoted her whole life and entire wealth to the education of the young. She was the first female convert in Britain and our first female saint, a beautiful woman and a noble princess. Nor is that the end of our Welsh story according to legend. The Druids from ancient times had a body of learning which they committed to memory, much in the form of poetry, while their training, which was oral, would continue at least until the age of twenty. Sadly so much of all that oral history (today called legends) of our early Christian background in Britain was to die with the Druids at the total massacre of two hundred of them, as they prayed as Christians for victory, not now against the Romans but the Saxons under Aethelfrith at Chester in 603AD. I quote from Bede – tales from a very famous place called Degastan. In this fight Theobald, Aethelfrith's brother, was killed together with all his army.

*Chapter 34. "At this time Aethelfrith, a very brave king and most eager for glory, was ruling over the kingdom of Northumbria. He ravaged the Britons more extensively than any other English ruler ... Aethelfrith was ignorant of the divine religion. For no ruler or king had subjected more land to the English race or settled it, having first either exterminated or conquered the natives ... For this reason Aedan, king of the Irish living in Britain, aroused by his successes, marched against him with an immensely strong army; but he was defeated and fled with few survivors. Indeed, almost all his army was cut to pieces... Aethelfrith brought this war to an end in the year of our Lord 603 ... From that time no Irish king in Britain has dared to make war on the*

*English race to this day.*"<sup>xi</sup> (Written eight years after Saint Augustine's arrival here at Thanet).

*'Our oral culture in Wales in that early period was not conducive to recording details'*, as described in the book by the Revd. D.

<sup>xii</sup> Daven Jones. Wales was in fact to be the favourite inheritor of Romano-British Christianity; standing stones testify to this, with Latin inscriptions dating from the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. These are especially to be found on the western side of Britain, also in Cumbria and the Isle of Man, still legible today. Many of these stone monuments were to be produced after 410 AD, after Rome had left, because, I repeat, the Romans bequeathed their fine system of education to the British as elsewhere, including written Latin; our early British form of writing was Ogham however, so that both Latin and Ogham are to be found on many of those early stones. Rome's conquest of western Britain however did not include Ireland.

In Wales we do have our own traditions also, but the eastern part of Britain has been overrun since by pagan Saxons, while the Irish raided the western shores of Wales; later the Vikings were to plunder many of our shores, burning our monasteries and plundering our precious books and much more. I fear that so many of the Welsh were forced to flee to the hills, where they were locked in, to preserve what little remained of their culture. Not all Britons however were painted savages, uncouth and illiterate; some had culture and skills; people were a mix, just as they are today. The Roman villas uncovered by archaeology give us a legacy of culture, while the Domesday Survey and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles also give us an insight into the way people were living in Britain.

We are all becoming familiar with the use of new scientific dating methods, such as carbon dating; it is all very exciting. Hopefully more new approaches are in the pipeline, which have not been available to mankind previously. Maybe they will illuminate the darker past, but perhaps not even in our day – who knows? Certainly in Pembrokeshire they are discovering burial cysts; it will be interesting to hear of new evidence.

I quote again verbatim from that excellent little book by the Rev D.Daven Jones chapter 3.

*'Although the Romano-British Church is included by Tertullian in his enumeration of the Christian countries at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, it is believed that there was no fully organized Church in this country prior to the year 176, as no mention is made by Irenaeus, who tabulated the western Churches in that year...The profession of Christianity, to which Tertullian may have referred, appears however to have become widespread here by the time of the tenth persecution which took place under Diocletian, AD 304, when in spite of the well-known clemency of Constantius, who then ruled over Gaul and Britain as Caesar, many British Christians are said by Gildas to have suffered for their religion, the most notable among whom were St Alban, of Verulam, described as the 'protomartyr' of Britain, and Aaron and Julius, of the city of Caerleon-on-Usk.'*

*There were British Bishops at Provincial Councils early in the 4<sup>th</sup> century there is proof that Britain had its Church, founded on an orthodox basis, having the three Orders of the Ministry, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and in the enjoyment of communion with the Catholic Church of the continent. At the Council of Arles, in Gaul, which was convened by Constantine the Great, AD 314, for the purpose of ascertaining the voice of the Catholic Church on the schism originated by the Donatists, so called from Donatus, an African bishop, the names of three British bishops, who were attended by a priest and a deacon, are among those of the assembled prelates. The bishops from Britain were Eborius, Bishop of York; Restitutus, Bishop of London; and Adelphus, Bishop of some British locality which has been the subject of dispute. These therefore, would appear to have been the accredited representatives of the Church established in the Roman provinces of Britain...St Athanasius, writing to the Emperor Jovian, AD 363, testifies that Britain was still faithful and loyal to Catholic Christianity. Before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, similar testimony is borne by St Chrysostom to the acceptance and use, on the part of the British Church, of Catholic discipline and formulae; while St Jerome also speaks of Britain, together with other*

countries – ‘as adoring one Christ, and observing one Rule of Truth.’

*The Church which existed in Britain previous to the Saxon invasion has, however, been described by Haddan in his ‘Remains’ (pp 216218), as a somewhat insignificant and effete institution, and one which was ‘confined mainly, if not exclusively, to Roman settlers, and Romanised natives.’...However it remained that she was a constituent part of the Catholic Church and regularly consulted from time to time, in the exercise of Catholic discipline, and the formulation of the Catholic Creed; as evinced by the presence of her bishops at the Councils of early Christendom...In short the Rev Daven Jones claims (as Gildas does) that it was due to Magnus Maximus (or Macsen Wledig in Welsh), removing all the youth of fighting age to accompany him to Rome after he had been proclaimed Emperor in Wales, that all Britain’s troubles began.*

In this introduction I have put the situation (briefly), in order to give some context of international relationships nearly a millennium later. The picture overleaf gives evidence of the connection of the Church in Wales with the eastern churches. It was taken in 1920 at the ‘Disestablishment of the Welsh church from the English church.’





**VISIT OF METROPOLITANS AND PATRIARCHS OF THE EASTERN  
CHURCH TO ST. DAVIDS - 1920**

*Seated Left to Right:* The Most Rev. the Metropolitan of Nubia; the Most Rev. the Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev; His Beatitude the Lord Photios, Patriarch and Pope of Alexandria; the Archbishop of Wales (Most Rev. A. G. Edwards); His Beatitude the Lord Damianos, Patriarch of Jerusalem; the Most Rev. the Metropolitan Euligie, Supreme Bishop in Russia; the Most Rev. Timotheos, Lord Bishop of Jordan.

*Those standing include:* Dr Nicholas Clubokousky, Professor of the New Testament Exegesis, Petrograd, Rev. the Archimandrite Kallopios; Priests & Monks (including Rev. Father Theodosios of World War I fame), and Representatives of the Church of England and America; the Director; interpreters and servants.

As we shall see St Martin's Gallic church owes as much to the church of the East, as it does to that of the west in Rome.

Meanwhile on the ground,<sup>xiv</sup> we have found evidence of Saint Martin's activity in Wales, particularly in Pembrokeshire.

Martin's wholehearted answer to God's call was made at a crucial time for Britain, when our main contact with the world church was fast developing by means of the seaways and the Eastern Mediterranean.

The importance of his work is epitomised in this photograph almost a millennium later, of Metropolitans and Patriarchs of the

Eastern Church at St Davids in 1920, at the disestablishment of the Welsh Church.

The British Church had sent three bishops (from York, London and Caerleon), to represent it at the Council of Arles in AD 314 (two years before St Martin was born), and also later at the Council of Rimini or Ariminium in 359.

Certainly the British church was far from rich, for we read that the visiting British bishops could not support themselves in 314, and had to seek the cost of their own lodgings from a pagan emperor! The Romans left in 410, but the affinity between the Gallic and British Churches and early missionary methods continued, and what we do know of them is clearly shown in the life of Saint Martin of Tours.

Now therefore, with that longest of introductions, we must turn to St Martin, and thank God for his wonderful life, as we concentrate and focus on the fast developing Gallo–Romano church. The Council at Arles in 315 almost coincides with his birth in 316, while his life covers almost the whole of the century until his death in 397. Roman withdrawal from Britain just over a decade later in 410 sadly also marks the beginning of chaos, when the British ruler, Vortigern, invited the Saxons into the country; they landed quietly on the Isle of Thanet, but in 449 they would invade in their hordes. Martin's wholehearted answer to God's call was made at a crucial time for Britain.

# Chapter One

## St Martin 316 –397

Martin was in fact discharged from the army aged forty; one year after Constantine had forced the bishops to sign the Arian creed. He left the army declaring that he was now embarking on a new life - ‘As a soldier of God’. This was in short his ‘wake-up call’, when he joined Hilary of Poitiers. Soon after this, Hilary would leave Poitiers and Martin likewise – all labelled *perigrinati*.

*Perigrinati means those in danger, – whose destiny and mission was to leave all and go out into the unknown for God.*

There is much evidence from archaeology<sup>xv</sup> that St Martin spent a major part of his life from now on, until he was reluctantly made bishop of Tours in 371, concentrating on his mission to Britain. In 356 he had left the Roman army to begin his training under Bishop Hilary of Poitiers. He was then aged forty and, for the rest of his life, his commitment to his mission was total. His calling was clear; he wished to become a monk and this monastic aim demanded ‘his all’ for the glory of God.

**There are many references in ‘*The Royal Commission of Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire*’ (Nash Williams) to St Martin in west Wales;** indeed in Pembrokeshire alone I can cite a few places using his name, remembering with caution that St Martin lived in the Roman period, and should not be confused by later references to others such as ‘Fitz Martin.’

24. The Parish of Angle in the Rural deanery of Castlemartin with the Parish Church dedicated to St. Mary. However the Rectory was appropriated by the Priory of Pembroke, a cell of the Benedictine Abbey of Seez in Normandy.
28. Elen’s Well is mentioned in the Parish of Angle on the cliffs half a mile east of Chapel Bay. Likewise the great Scandinavian Duchy of Normandy in France knew that monks inhabited Caldey Island in the time of Martin, and knew of his cell there.
107. The Parish of Camros, in the hamlet of St Martin, a suburb of Haverfordwest.
141. The Parish of Castlemartin with an earthwork on the verge of the cliffs at the mouth of Milford Haven.
144. Castle Martin. In the village of Castlemartin, in a field north of the meeting of five roads is an earthwork noted by Leland as

the vestigial remains of Martine Castel.

145. King's Mill earthwork has also been a moated earthwork, with a little stream called Castlemartin Corse.

148. A chapel dedicated to St Martin with a small burial ground attached.

177. The Parish of Clarboston is dedicated to St Martin, under the title Ecclesia Sancti Martini de Villa Clarenbaldi.

The Parish of Fishguard North has Roman remains, probably because there was a Roman station here.

246. Llan Fartin (In 6in. Ordnance Survey sheet, Pembroke 9 NE; latitude 51 59/ 30", longitude 4 59'45") represents St Martin at Llanfartin.

250. The Parish of Fishguard South. In a field known as Parc yr Och, the field of Lamentation, 200 yards west of the footpath which divides the parish from Llanstinian and a Sepulchral mound. (Is this Martin or Justinian?)

282. Haverfordwest Parish of the Hamlet of St Martin.

284 The Parish of Haverfordwest again note that the church of St Martin is frequently termed 'Castle church', for example, the Parish church of St Martin in Haverford.

Finally -

662. The dedication is said to be to St Marcellus but should be more probably to St Martin. The festal period of Martinmas is frequently called Martelmas. The name Marteltewi on the original 1 inch Ordnance Survey map is probably due to an erroneous association with the river Tywi. The church was appropriated to the Hospitalers' church of Slebech.

There are more, but perhaps this suffices to prove the point.

Of special interest however are:

153 Apostles Park (6in Ord.Surv.sheet, Pem.42 N.W; lat. 52 37 37 long. 5 0 32). Field next south of Pricaston farm house. (Tithe schedule No. 228) Name retained, history unknown.

182 Heron's Castle. Roman pottery. Builders knew the art of & fortification. 'Druidical monuments and ancient walks 183

which you meet with at every turn', and evidence of an extensive settlement of the earliest inhabitants, such as evidence of an extensive town 'Tref Culhwch.' Clearly these are favourite resorts of the Druids and the Bards, e.g. 'Fynnon Druidion', for in no way do they resemble flints or barrows of Wiltshire etc.

It would be so easy to divert our attention from St Martin's period in this fascinating county. Later men named Martin can also confuse the issue, but St Martin's presence is evident.

Other places of special interest for example are – The Parish of Crinow (earthworks Castle Mounts without enclosures) ...The mound is placed within *Castle Meadow*; and this has marked resemblance to the military mounds in the county... found within 50 yards of the Parish church.

202. *The Green Castle, or Clun Patel Mound.* (6" Ord.Surv.sheet. Pemb 29 S.E; lat 51 47'39"long. 4 42' 50").

287. Skomer Island. I quote again from the *Royal Commission for Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire*, 'The largest collection of hut circles I have ever seen, where they may be counted by hundreds, many of which are surrounded by an enclosure marked out with single stones, containing about an acre - perhaps an early monastery'.

One must add that special Parish Church of Llanwnda, (St Gwyndaf) 6<sup>th</sup> century OS SM 932 396, situated on the cliffs overlooking the sea, with carvings of crosses and a man's head on the outside wall, and a baptismal stream.

St Georges Channel and Strumble Head are important, being the nearest point to Waterford and Wexford in Ireland; from here the Dyfed ancestry invaded. Strumble Head, Gaer Fawr and Gaer Fach became also the scene of the French landings in 1797.

Tref Asser is the traditional home of King Alfred's friend and Councillor Bishop Asser.

I would include the Parish of Ludchurch also because of its fine Cromlech, but it is the mention of 'Egypt' which immediately strikes one.

622. In the Hamlet of 'Egypt' is the Egypt Cromlech, on either side of the high road. 3 Stones (now partially buried) remain of the cromlech, when visited by others in May 1915.

624. Hill camp. Clearly this does not resemble the great hill camps of Wales. "In shape it is long and rectangular, the length of the interior being 700 feet x 250 feet broad, perfect angles. Slightly rounded giving the symmetrical appearance of a Roman earthwork." Whilst concentrating on Saint Martin, we firmly fix our attention on the Roman period.

To return to Saint Martin himself. His personal rigorous call to prayer and training now began. The Roman army from an early age had given him personal discipline; now he needed to concentrate on a further discipline, which meant total abandonment to God's will and guidance. His appearance became dishevelled; his manner of life was that of an ascetic, minimalised to the point of living in caves and abandoning himself to worship and prayer. The commitment was entire. It is probable that he explored the eastern part of Britain, before turning west. Certainly we know of the church loved and used to this day, St Martins in the Fields which was built in the fields around Westminster Abbey (dedicated to St Peter). St Paul's Cathedral is of course dedicated to St Paul. London was a Roman town in Martin's day. Perhaps he landed first in the eastern Isle of Thanet, where the later Saxons were to settle, for Queen Bertha was to worship in St Martin's church, inland at the site of the town we know as Canterbury, some two hundred years after Martin's death. However in his exploration of western Britain, St Martin's island in the Isles of Scilly may have been a good 'stopping off ground'. The Gallic Church was responsible for the support and building up of the evangelistic Christian faith in that western side of Britain, immediately before the influx of the Saxon invasions on the east coast. St Martin's work was crucial in this regard. The pagan invasions were to flood down the continent, even to Rome. It is necessary here to explain what was to happen to the Christian church in the west of Britain as a result of these Saxon invasions, and how St Martin from Gaul set out by the seaways, to try to save our ancient church. I will give a short account of some of the chief Christians who were involved in this work in the west, until the

Christian Queen Bertha was to turn the tide for the Roman Church in the eastern side of Britain also. But first it is necessary to expand on the division between the Church in the East and the Church in the West, and how the Church of England contains a Celtic element and a Roman element from its earliest years.

Many minor schisms have rumbled on in the 2000 or so years of the Christian Church. However three major schisms – roughly in 500, 1000 and 1500 have become landmarks in Church relations. Here we will concentrate on the first schism around 500AD.

### Background to the first schism of the Christian Church.

Christianity grew up around the Mediterranean – Palestine, North Africa, Italy, Greece and Spain. In a very short time it spread further north, even as far as the NW province of the Roman Empire, Britain, which via the ancient sea routes had been in constant communication with the Mediterranean from earliest times. Jesus Christ was born a Jew, and it was to his fellow Jews that he first preached. He was born into that part of the Roman Empire, which had previously been Hellenistic/Greek-speaking. His first disciples were Jews also, but very early it became apparent that the message was not for Jews alone, but also for Gentiles.

Christian Organisation. During the first ten centuries the Church was organised around the Patriarchates – there were five, in this order:-

- 1) Old Rome.
- 2) New Rome (Constantinople).
- 3) Alexandria.
- 4) Antioch.
- 5) Jerusalem. The Council of Constantinople in 381 decreed that the Bishop of Constantinople was to have primacy after the Bishop of Rome, ‘because Constantinople is the new Rome’. The four Eastern ones were thus Greek-speaking, but under Latin-speaking Rome. Rome was however first amongst the five, first among equals (*primus inter pares*), because it was believed that both St Peter and St Paul were martyred there, while St Peter was also the first bishop of Rome. Christ had said of Peter – ‘On this

rock I will build My Church.’ (Curiously Jerusalem came at the bottom!) As time went by, independent churches developed in the Orthodox east. In 450 the eastern churches outside Constantinople included the Copts, Armenians and Ethiopians, with 16 others answerable to Constantinople, but autonomous and free to run their own individual regimes. Today for example, the Greek Orthodox Church alone includes Crete, Rhodes, and all Greeks in the UK, USA, Australia and elsewhere. The main differences between the Church in the East and the Church in the West were to become:-

The ‘Filioque clause’,

The Power of the Pope,

Married or unmarried clergy,

One language Latin, - or many languages, allowing the national and regional churches to develop from the centre at Constantinople.

Worship The very varied cultural differences led to concern about differences of worship; the Eastern Church for instance made full use of the senses, with much incense, lamps and candles burning, and chants by their priests, wearing brightly coloured vestments and ceremonial, using the vernacular, accompanied by much bowing and signing of the cross, worshippers prostrating themselves in front of icons.

The Creeds In 325, The Nicene Creed had caused controversy about the person of Christ. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 gave definition that ‘He was perfect in Godhead, and perfect in manhood’, ‘Christ is one nature and one person.’ (The Coptic churches of the East have never accepted this). All these definitions were hot matters for debate, particularly the Trinity for instance. In the West the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not so strong as in the East; Saint Seraphim of Sarov for example said, ‘The whole purpose of the Christian life is acquisition of the Holy Spirit’. The debates continued.<sup>xvii</sup>

In 356 AD, Martin left the army and joined Hilary at Poitiers. Soon after this, Hilary was expelled from Poitiers for refusing to agree to the church order to support Arianism. Martin left Poitiers



soon after, and at Liguge and an island retreat came to the decision that he wished to become a monk. When Hilary returned to Poitiers, Martin joined him, and for the remaining fifteen years Martin was free to travel and develop connections in Britain. His home base remained at Marmoutier however, and the caves in the cliff behind. He had a church not far from the river Loire nearby, where the many followers he was to gather over the years would come for prayer and dedication to God. In Britain, London had become a thriving town and Martin as a Roman citizen could travel widely as long as the Roman occupation continued. Saint Martin's plan to resist the loss of the Christian faith in the West was visionary. (In his day the Romans were still in Britain, although the Saxon threat was present). *Roman supremacy and, for the ruling classes, Roman education, took the place of the previous education of the young by the Druids which lasted twenty years. This included theology, astronomy, geography and physics. They were also conversant with the Greek language according to Pliny, from which the name Druid is derived in Welsh*<sup>xviii</sup> *'derwyddon' or 'derw'. Armorican 'dero' Cornish 'dar')*

## Chapter Two

The Celtic Sea St Ninian 360 – 431, & Queen Elen and St Patrick 385-461 Monastic Britain, Ordnance Survey (south sheet) 1976.

360 Ninian was born just four years after Martin left the Roman army to join Hilary in Poitiers. Ninian's father was a Christian,



ruling southern Scotland. The Irish began to invade Cumbria.

367 Angles invaded from the east, Picts from the north and Scots from the west.

369 Theodosius however re-established Roman rule in the area, with peace and Romanisation for two decades.

Ninian's father sent him to Rome to study for the priesthood. He was received by the Pope, who consecrated him after sending him to study under St Jerome, and then sent him home to convert his own people.

*(Since in 371 Martin was made Bishop of Tours, after fifteen years of freedom to travel and work, it meant he was able to train Ninian for his future work at Tours).*

383 On his way home Ninian visited Martin at Tours, and worked with him. Like most plans, St Martin's plan evolved as time went on. Ninian, being about thirty-five years younger than Martin, still had his life ahead of him, just as Martin did when he left the army aged forty in 356. *(Martin's years as a Roman soldier would have taught him about founding encampments, and the need for rugged toughness in face of a pagan threat. It was not going to be an easy challenge. He was an ideal teacher for Ninian in so many ways, as a soldier for Christ in a pagan world).* However that was in the future for Ninian; at present the threat had not materialised

392 Ninian returned to Cumbria (Rheged), where he established many churches. Whithorn was his base however; he built an abbey at Candida Casa, where his church still stands on the sea shore in a sheltered bay, built in stone by masons he brought with him from Gaul and dedicated to Saint Martin.

410 The Roman army withdrew, but Ninian's work continued and his great mission to the Picts began, covering the whole of the NE coast from his base at Whithorn and continuing until

431 when he died. *(The year Patrick began his mission to Ireland).*

Ninian was the first of St Martin's protégés to pioneer the work with those people now surrounding the Celtic Sea. Later, after Martin's death, Vortigern, the British leader at the time, would invite Saxons into the Isle of Thanet, to fight for the British cause against invaders from the east; because of the withdrawal of the Roman soldiers in 410 AD to defend Rome, Britain had been left defenceless; there was no time to lose.

‘The Islands of the Seas’ are mentioned in the Bible, and Monasticism became a feature in many. Whilst staying on Bardsey Island during a Retreat we were given a talk by Brother Gildas on the Rule of St Benedict. He started by saying that Welsh monasticism was unique.

**‘The Celtic Pond’** (Nora Chadwick). ‘The Celtic Sea’ or ‘THE ISLANDS OF THE SEAS’ (Isaiah 11:11) comprising Whithorn, the Isle of Man, St Bees, Ireland and Wales.

Wales was a matriarchal society and Elen, Queen of all Wales, ruled from Caernarvon, in the north the Isles of Anglesey, Bardsey, Skoholm, and Caldey and so on, Carmarthen, Caerleon and Wales generally.

Undoubtedly Saint Martin must have sailed around this area, whilst he was working out his plans. The groundwork was quite clear for Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire, but not only on the ground, for he would have known Queen Elen as a girl, when her father was alive; in all probability Martin influenced her as a Christian saint from early in her life, for Elen was certainly a Christian. She married Magnus Maximus (Maxim Wledig), designated Roman Emperor, after previously being a governor in Spain. There was a strong connection between the gold mines of Rio Tinto in Spain and the Dolaucothi gold mine in Wales. Elen devised a road system over the whole of Wales, Roman roads which can still be travelled and known today as ‘Sarn Elen’ or Helen. I enclose her family tree below. As a Christian she must have been much concerned about the threats to her kingdom, particularly from the Irish, just across the sea from Wales. Undoubtedly Saint Martin would have been in close contact with her during his planning period. Like most plans, Martin’s evolved as time went on; he and Elen became firm friends, fighting for the very survival of Christianity in the area.

Martin’s wholehearted answer to God’s call was made at a crucial time for Britain, when our main contact with the world church was fast developing by means of the seaways and the Eastern Mediterranean. Had Magnus Maximus been successful as Roman Emperor the story might have been very different.

On their way to Rome in 385 they had visited Martin of Tours and

lunched with him. Bede speaks of this luncheon with amazement, because Queen Elen was so grateful for all that Saint Martin had done for them that she washed his feet and cooked his meal. No doubt this was a very happy visit, for amongst other things they were able to give Saint Martin the news that his sister was expecting a baby. That baby was to be Patrick, who was so crucial in the conversion of Ireland.

Whilst they were in Rome their son Vortigern (see family tree) remained in Britain to defend it. He panicked because his father had taken all available troops with him to defend Rome, including some who were British, leaving the whole country vulnerable to the threat of pagan insurgents; Vortigern's response was to invite Saxons into this country to help him defend it, since the Romans had left to defend Rome itself from those same invaders in 410, Vortigern married Rowena, the daughter of Hengist their leader, although he already had a British wife, Severa.

Since I have been quite recently to Magnus Maximus's fort above Caernarvon with the Cambrian Archaeological Society, I can enclose a recent photograph of the remains. Magnus and Elen had sons who were later to own their share of the kingdom of Wales. The Saxons thus decided to remain in Britain, while Magnus Maximus ruled for only a short time, before he was assassinated in Rome, and Elen returned to Wales. Wales was a matriarchal society and undoubtedly Queen Elen would have ruled Wales in these troubled times with her Christian wisdom. She built roads throughout Wales which are still in evidence, and raised her five sons, later they each had their own territory, for instance Dyfed in the south was named Demetia after one of her sons.

#### Queen Elen of Wales and Magnus Maximus.

*Bede tells us that Magnus Maximus was an energetic and upright man, one worthy of the title of Augustus, had he not risen to the rank of dictator by breaking his oath of allegiance; he was elected emperor by the army in Britain almost against his will, crossed to Gaul and murdered Gratian ... he drove Gratian's brother from Italy ...but he, Maximus, was himself then trapped within the walls of Aquileia and killed.*

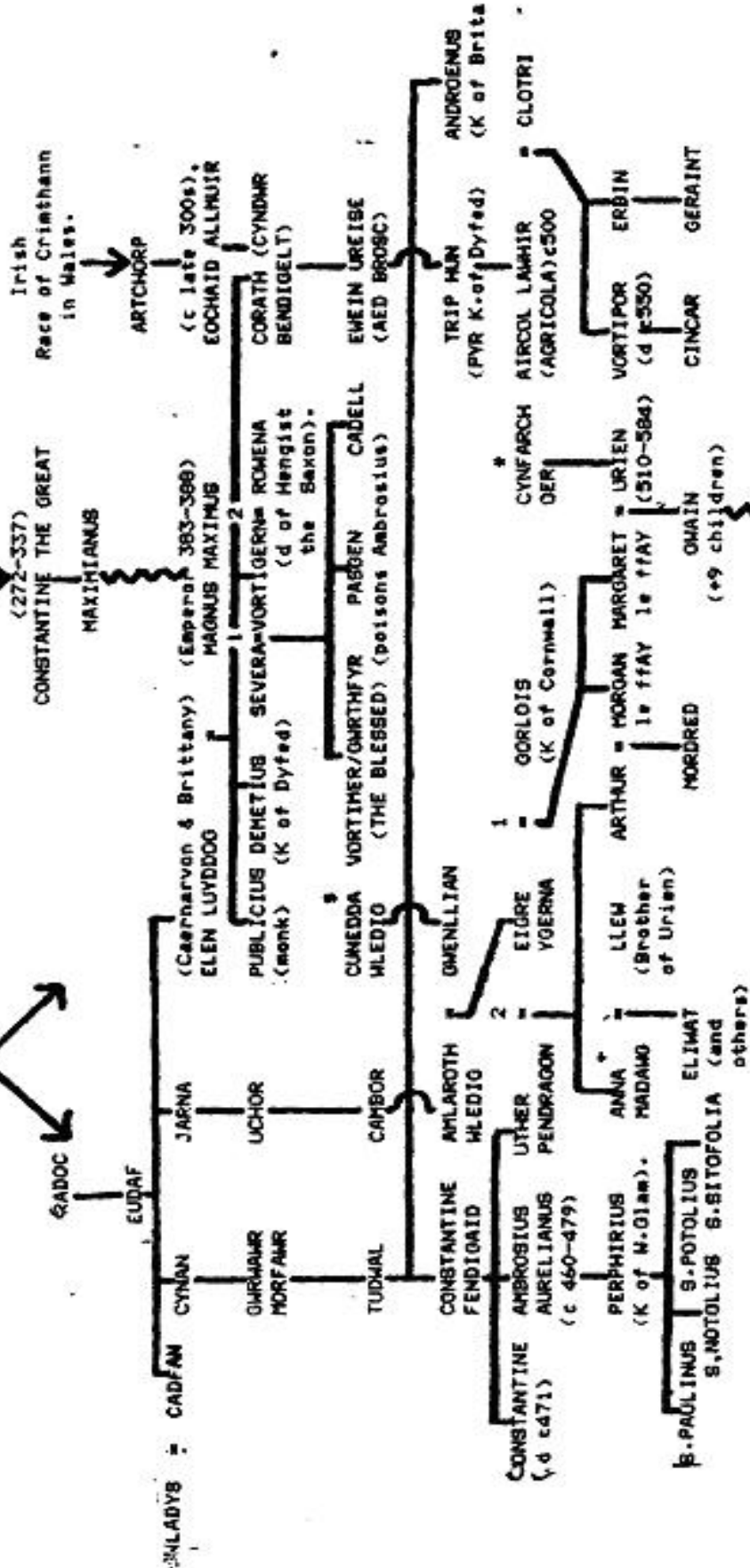
Mrs Edith Ransome wrote a book in 1925 intended for children , indeed when I was in school I used this. I would like to quote from it now:

*'As long as the Britons had the Romans to protect them they lived peacefully enough, but directly they were left to themselves their troubles began.*

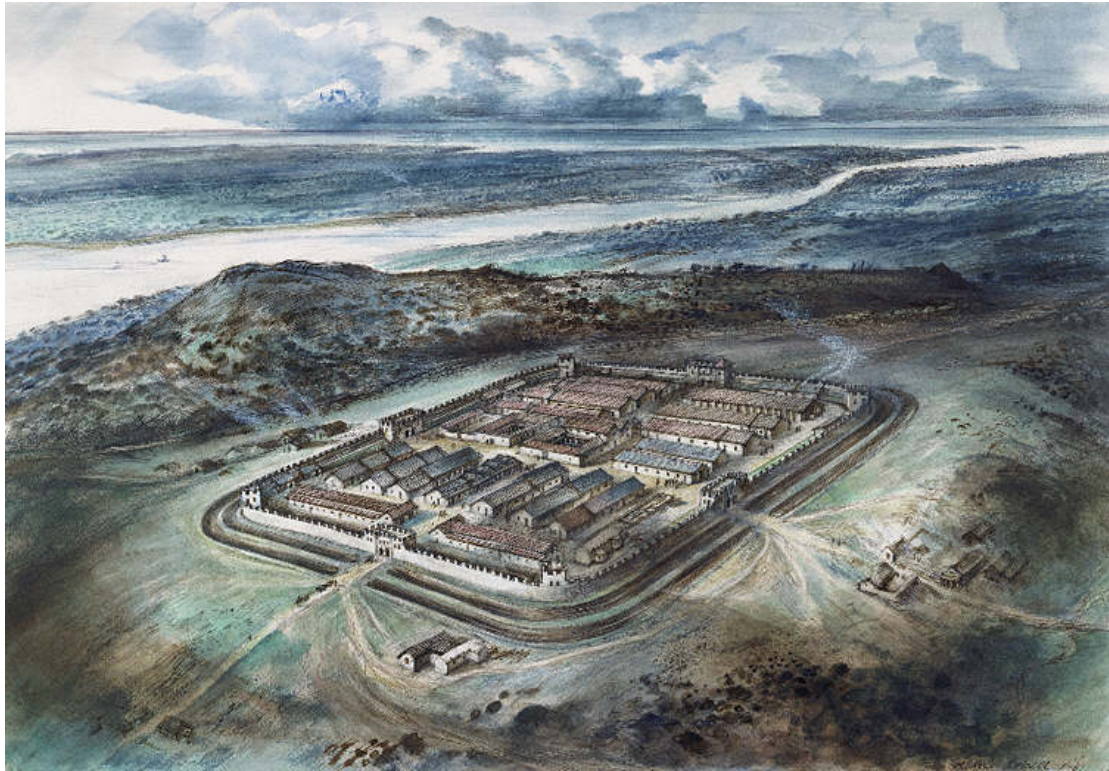
*The Picts and Scots, as the wild tribes were called, who lived on the further side of the Roman wall, attacked them in the north, while the fierce German pirates came over the sea and tried to land and settle on their east coast. In the time of the Romans, the Picts and Scots and the English, as these pirates were called, tempted by the rich pastures and the flocks and herds of the British, had often tried to land and plunder the country. But the Romans, with their wall across the north of the country, and some forts which they afterwards erected along the east coast, and their well-trained soldiers, had always been able to drive them out.'*

Jesus College  
MS XX Tables XI & X

Jesus College MS XX Table XIII  
and 'Harleian MS' 3589 Table II



British line to Henry VII  
(Thos Firbank - 'A County of Memorable  
honour').



**SEGONTIUM ROMAN FORT**





*Many of the Britons, as we read, had become Christians in the time of the Romans, but their English conquerors were heathens. They told their countrymen in Germany of all the good things they were enjoying in Britain, and these too began to cross the sea by hundreds and thousands that they might enjoy the spoil. The Britons were unable to defend themselves from the swarms of invaders who now poured into the country. When the English drove the Christian Britons out of their homes and burned their towns and churches, most of them took refuge in the forests and mountains of Wales. There they were able to worship in peace, but they do not seem to have tried to teach their religion to the English, though they sent missionaries to Ireland, and many of the Picts and Scots became Christians. The English worshipped a number of gods, such as Thor, the god of thunder, and Woden, whom they looked upon with special reverence as the leader of the German race, to which they belonged. Their lands were poor and badly cultivated because they were warlike and became pirates. The three tribes which made up the English race, the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes, gradually divided up the land into kingdoms, and as they were very fierce and warlike people, the kings of all these little countries were constantly fighting amongst themselves to get the mastery. They were often very cruel to each other, and ill-treated their prisoners or sold them as slaves'.*

The Celts had always been a tribal people so that, when the Romans left Britain c410 and with the Saxon invaders advancing ever further west, some fled from the towns, reoccupying their hill forts under local kings; many others stayed in their homes alongside their invaders so that some pockets of Celts remained in the east of Britain, although in the west the people remained subject to their overall king or Pendragon.

Previously under the Romans, the Christian religion had come to be organised on diocesan lines and town-based. The town or city was the parish, while groups of cities with their territories (which the government already called provinces) became ecclesiastical provinces or dioceses, placed under a bishop from the chief city; indeed secular and religious power were often intertwined, as for example in St Patrick's time; Patrick's father not only had civic duties in local government as decurio or town councillor, but he was also a landowner and an ordained deacon.

## Chapter Three

### The Isle of Man, Ireland & St Patrick 385 – 461

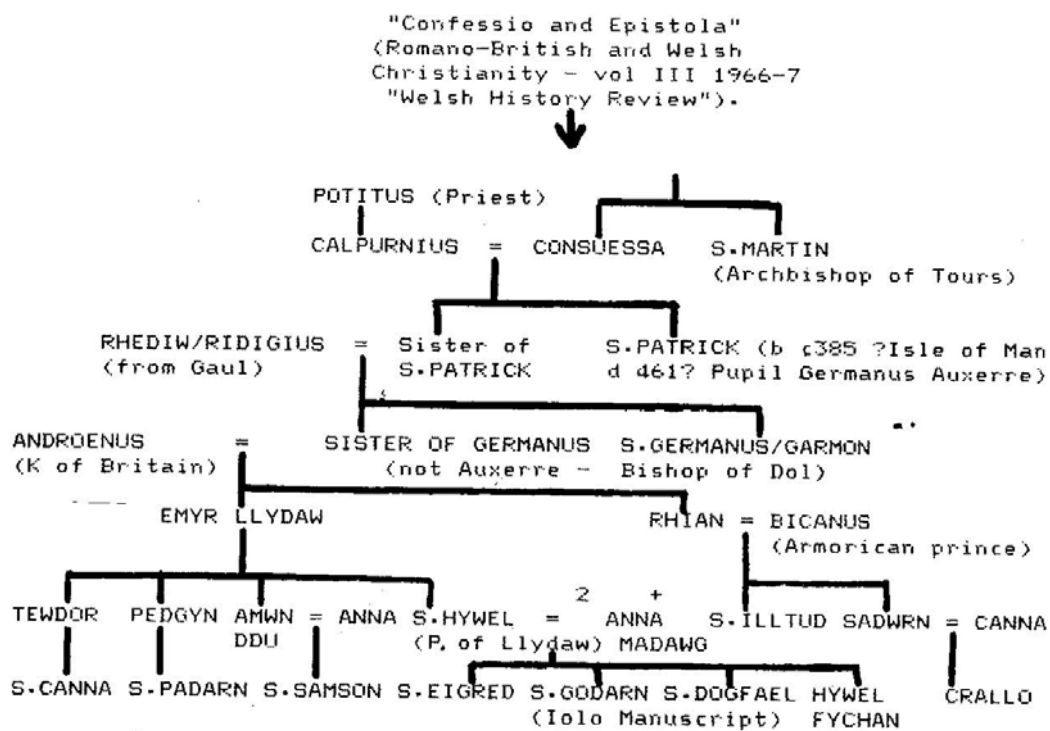
The Isle of Man is the central pivot of this ‘Celtic pond’, where it is probable that Saint Martin sent Potitus the priest from Gaul, to teach the people. The coasts around were fierce pagan territory, but these evangelists were brave people, prepared to stand on the front line for Christ, while they must help and support each other as Soul Friends – and as Spiritual Directors in the monasteries.

Patrick himself tells us that his grandfather was Potitus (a priest), his father Calpurnius (a deacon) and his mother Consuessa, sister of Saint Martin of Tours. In the next generation Patrick’s sister was to marry Ridigius of Gaul, and their daughter married Androenus, King of Britain, their son being Emyr Llydaw, the father of Amwn Ddu and grandfather of Saints Padarn and Samson, amongst several others.

Patrick was born in 385, the same year that Elen and Magnus Maximus lunched with his uncle Saint Martin on their way to Rome, where Magnus Maximus was proclaimed Emperor, but later assassinated.

There is some dispute about the exact place of Patrick’s birth in 385; his full name was, in the Latin of the day, Magonus Sucatus Patricius. However the famous archaeologist Dr Raleigh Radford called him ‘Patrick of Man’, meaning the Isle of Man, and this I can go along with as the probable place. Here he grew up until the age of 16. The Irish not yet having invaded, the people would have been British. Patrick had every opportunity to gain an excellent education, for his grandfather (the priest) Potitus and his father (the deacon) Calpurnius were trained in Latin and Greek, and came from Gaul to evangelise the pagan inhabitants. However we hear from St Patrick himself that he preferred to grow up, behaving like a normal teenage boy, paying little attention to books and learning, instead running riot like many of his contemporaries. It must have been a great disappointment to both his mother and his uncle Martin, who died when he was twelve, 13 years before the withdrawal of Rome in the year 410. Patrick was later himself to say that he very much regretted his riotous youth. However the Irish were beginning to invade and, when they reached the Isle of Man, Patrick was taken prisoner at the age of 16 in the year 401, to be shipped away to Ireland.

Patrick's sister, who perhaps had been sent for safety to live near her uncle St Martin at Tours, must have had a gentle upbringing, for later we hear that she was to marry into one of the leading families in Gaul. Her husband was named Ridigius or Rhediw, to become the founder of the Breton Royal family. Indeed St Patrick's sister was to become great great grandmother of several saints, including St Samson, amongst many others once again. (see below)



For "Celtic Pond." I recommend 'The Celts' by Nora Chadwick. London Folio Society. 2001

## Patrick in Ireland and Gaul.

We are fortunate in having several written works by St Patrick himself, making history come alive. He tells us how he was sold as a slave in Ireland, where he spent 6 years as a shepherd's boy, his master according to tradition being a Druid. In 407, at the age of 22 he heard a voice in a dream, telling him to go home; he walked 200 miles to find the ship that his dream had told him would be waiting for him. He was taken by a boat carrying Irish hounds to Gaul. During this period he repeatedly heard the voice of the Irish calling him back; in short he underwent several profound spiritual experiences. It is not clear when Patrick finally reached his home again, where he was taught for a while by his family. He then decided to take holy orders and went back to Gaul for his studies, where he trained under Germanus of Auxerre, who was appointed to Auxerre in 418 on the death of Bishop Amator.

In Gaul Patrick's sister had a son named Germanus, later to become Bishop of Dol (not to be confused with Patrick's tutor Germanus of Auxerre). In 420 Germanus of Auxerre together with Lupus travelled to Britain to put down Pelagianism. It is possible that Patrick was included in this party when he would have been about thirty-five. He was considered to become bishop of Ireland, but was turned down because of some youthful indiscretion, Palladius being sent in his stead; however Palladius died three years later and Patrick, returning to Gaul, was consecrated bishop of Ireland at the age of 47, in 431, the same year that Ninian died and also the year that Patrick was to begin his mission to Ireland.

Within the space of thirty years before his death, the country became almost entirely Christian, although he had enormous difficulties on the way. Some of his letters have survived, including one to Coroticus or Ceredig, founder of Ceredigion (Cardigan) in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, who had killed several of Patrick's new converts and had taken others into slavery, as had happened of course to Patrick himself. He then set about converting the princes of the many small states in Ireland and recruiting many of his new clergy from the ranks of the nobility. He also spread the virtues of the monastic life for which he had great affection. Patrick founded his own episcopal see at Armagh. His task of

converting the whole of Ireland was fraught with difficulties, since there was opposition not only from the old druidic tradition, but also from some elements of the ruling classes. Within the space of thirty years, the country was to become almost entirely Christian. This astonishing missionary work was given the official seal from Pope Leo I before, according to tradition, Patrick died on March 17<sup>th</sup> 461 in Ulster. Before his death Patrick is believed to have understood that St David would be born; however it was apparently thirty years before David's birth. Also it is believed that both Patrick and David wished to be buried at Glastonbury. Whether or not this happened we cannot tell. Dr Raleigh Radford did the dig at Glastonbury; I wish I had asked him, for his papers are in London, but he did show me papers on Ahia Sophia, amongst others.

There is a great deal more that one could say about Patrick. On the south coast of Wales between Pembrey and Llanelli are the Sidan Sands, where Cefn Patrick is marked on the nineteenth century map of Llanelli. These treacherous moving sandbanks have caused many a disaster to ships, wrecks being common here in the Loughor estuary. However St Illtud's church still stands close by in Pembrey, as a mark that this was once a landing place for boats from the continent.

I believe also that nothing could be more likely than that Germanus of Auxerre (d.448 AD), who travelled to Britain on several occasions, came to both the Isle of Man and Whithorn.

When in 440 Germanus of Auxerre again came to put down Pelagianism, he brought Patrick's nephew Germanus of Dol (then aged 30), who was staying with Patrick. Germanus also sent Isernius to help Patrick, Isernius being the founder of Llan Hernin in Llanegwad near Dryslwyn Fawr, where my mother's family, the Harris family lived, the castle being on their land, my great grandfather also being Lord Cawdor's sub-Agent. I repeat that I have a very special interest in that my family were later to own both the land and the castle.

The old Roman road, the A40, would have led to the coast in Pembrokeshire en route for Ireland, while into this area further up the valley Brychan would come to settle.

Later, in 450, Germanus of Dol stayed with Illtud and Brioc in their monasteries, when he came to live in Wales. Later still he travelled with Patrick to the Isle of Man, where he was proclaimed bishop. 461 Patrick died in Armagh in Ireland, aged

76. In AD 462 Bishop Germanus of Dol (Patrick's nephew) was to found a monastery, dedicated to his uncle Patrick on the Isle of Man. This monastic foundation is on the western side of the island, where we find the village or church of 'Patrick' under the name Germanus but very faint, and does not show up on my copy on the *Ordnance Survey map of Monastic Britain, scale about ten miles to one inch, published in 1978*

Germanus of Dol's sister, Patrick's sister's daughter, was to marry Androenus, King of Britain, thus becoming the ancestor of the family of Emyr Llydaw in Brittany, whose children became so very important in carrying on the Christian message in their turn. Likewise Emyr Llydaw's sister married Bicanus, Prince of Armorica whose children included St Illtud, and St Sadwrn who is commemorated near Llandoverly, along with many other saints in the succeeding generation.

### Summary.

385 Queen Elen and Magnus Maximus lunched with St Martin aged 69. 385 Patrick of Man born 410 Patrick's sister had a son in Gaul named Germanus to be

bishop of Dol. 418 Germanus appointed to Auxerre on death of bishop Amator. 420 Germanus and Lupus came to Britain to put down

Pelagianism.

440 Germanus of Auxerre again came to put down Pelagianism, they send Isernius to help Patrick. 450 Patrick's nephew Germanus of Dol, came to stay with Illtud

and Brioc in their monasteries in Britain. 461? Patrick died in Armagh in Ireland aged 76. 462 Germanus of Dol founded a monastery in the Isle of Man. It

is interesting that so many centuries have passed, and yet even after all this time we have a soft spot for Patrick, so that we all have an interest in exploring more about him which makes it all

the more personal. Patrick's letter to Coroticus or Ceredig is an important piece of contemporary writing. In this Patrick writes in horror to Ceredig after the wanton slaughter and capture of many of his new converts in Ireland. Ceredig came down from Scotland to help to defend Wales against the incursions of the Irish, just as Patrick had been taken earlier. Today in Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire and even Carmarthenshire the descendants of Ceredig are still living. The ancient family goes back to the earliest British records. The late Mrs Lorna Blandy of Dolaubran, Llandovery, kindly gave permission to copy this her family's 'Quarterings of Lloyd', inserted here, to help the reader to visualise these relationships. We see descendants of this ancient Welsh family as far back as Coel Gotelig (King Cole) and Ceredig, also known as Wledig (or Coroticus), the founder of Ceredigion mentioned by Saint Patrick.

**Patrick's writings** include 'The Confession', an open letter thanking God for his guidance and grace, which shows the strength, energy and fervour of his mission in Ireland, two letters and some fragments, a set of religious rules or canons, and the so-called Lorica, St Patrick's Breastplate. Patrick and his companions were once saved from ambush by reciting this. As a Christian, Coroticus had come down from Scotland, to help defend against the incursions of the Irish, and to become defender of Roman Christians in south-west Britain against pirates, such as those who abducted Patrick in his youth.

Earlier, Coroticus had become so powerful that he was able to launch reprisal raids against Ireland. His men slaughtered a number of Patrick's new converts and abducted the rest into slavery. In an important piece of contemporary writing, Patrick demands retribution, even excommunication of Coroticus himself. It shows his strained relations with some Christians in Britain. Whether it was Saint Patrick's letter to him that turned Coroticus around or not, this formidable Briton, who had come down from the north to settle on the Celtic shores at Ceredigion, changed his attitude to Ireland. Because of the increasing weakness of defences in the country, the indigenous people in Britain rallied round to make a concerted effort to defend their country against the insurgents. The Celtic period in Britain was

comparatively short, but its influence was immense. Today we are turning to it with renewed interest, since archaeology and historical research in various fields have uncovered facts about which we were formerly unaware.



## Chapter Four

### The Saxon Insurgence in 410 AD.

Bede tells us that when Vortigern realised that Magnus Maximus had taken almost all the available men of fighting age with him to Rome, Britain was left defenceless, so that Vortigern invited the races of Angles or Saxons to help him. They came in three boats, and Vortigern gave them the island of Thanet to settle, on condition that they helped him defend the country.<sup>xxi</sup> However this was just the beginning, for they discovered that the land was fertile and the inhabitants slack, so that soon Britain would be swamped by hordes of these people.

Firstly however three very powerful Germanic tribes landed:-

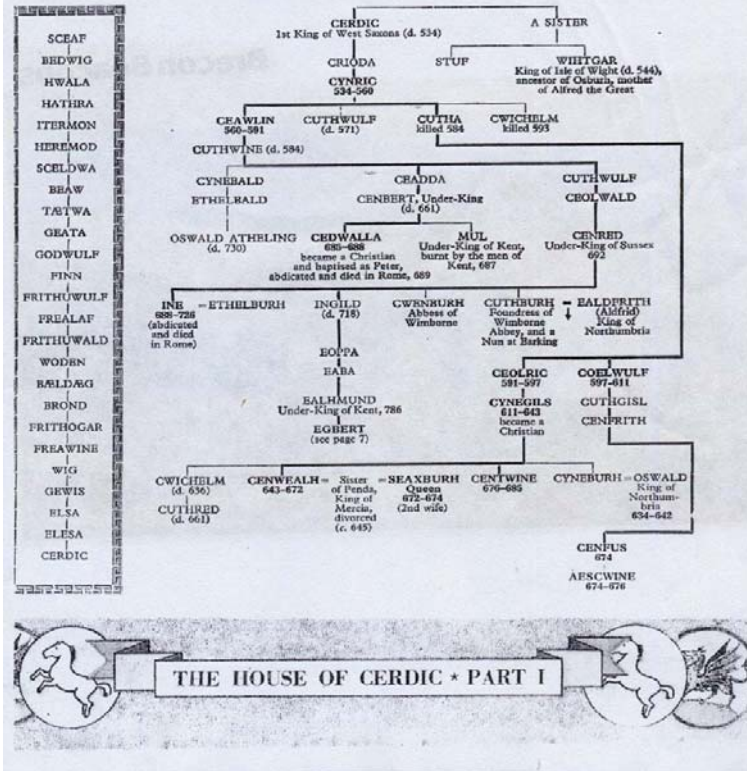
1. East Saxons,
2. West Saxons, and
3. Saxons, founded by Hengist and Horsa, also called Jutes, Hengist being King Ethelbert's forebear.. They were given Thanet island, later inhabiting the Isle of Wight and part of Wessex.
4. Others followed viz:- East Angles to part of Wessex.
5. Middle Angles, the Mercians and all the Northumbrians.
6. And in the north the Picts now joined forces with the

<sup>xxii</sup>  
Saxons against the British. Bede goes on to tell us that *the Saxons ravaged and burnt all the Cities and surrounding neighbourhood from east, to the western sea, and with no one to stop them, until they covered the whole face of the doomed island. The public and private buildings fell into ruins, priests were everywhere slain at their altars, prelates and people alike perished by the sword and fire, regardless of rank, and there was no one left to bury those who had died a cruel death ...* (I include here two of the family trees of the Anglo-Saxon invaders). The historian, the Venerable Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, was born around the year 673, and he is an invaluable source for this period which was just over one hundred years before his birth he died in 735. I also quote from *Anglo-Saxon Britain*, by Sir Frank Stenton.

**THE HOUSE OF CERDIC \* PART I**

**C**ERDIC, the Saxon Chieftain who founded the Kingdom of Wessex, was also the virtual founder of British Monarchy. The pedigree on the left is the genealogy of Cerdic, which should be regarded as legendary. It was the one qualification of the early Kings of Wessex that they should be descended from Cerdic. Otherwise fitness to rule was the only factor taken into con-

sideration. The strongest Kings were Ceawlin, Cedwalla, Ine and Egbert. Cynegils was the first Christian King. Cedwalla and Ine both abdicated their thrones to make pilgrimages to Rome, and died there. The Kings between Ine and Egbert (726-802) were of minor importance, being eclipsed by the Kings of Mercia and Northumbria, and their lineage is not known.



These pictures give us some of the context into which Queen Berta was about to step, her own lifespan being roughly 565-612 AD. And her descendants were to carry the Christian faith into this turmoil.

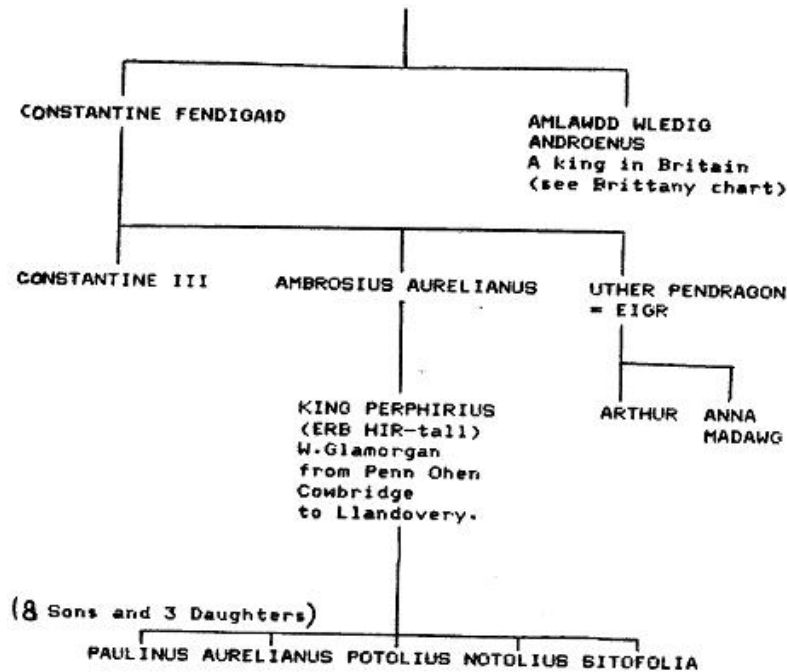
*People began to flee abroad (mainly to Brittany), to escape being slaves to the voracious newcomers. Others stood their ground as under the leadership of Ambrosius Aurelianus, who lived at Amesbury in the central part of Britain. His parents who were of the Roman royalty had died, so that he was the natural leader, and the Britons under him regained their strength. Ambrosius Aurelianus was the brother of Uther Pendragon and Constantine of Dumnonia (Cornwall and Devon). He was the father of King Perphirius who came to live in Llandoverly near the gold mine, which comes to importance in this story, with Llandeilo as its centre. He was also grandfather of Paul Aurelian, who founded*

Pol de Leon in Brittany. *When the army of the enemy had exterminated or scattered the native prelates and peoples, they returned to their homes. As the Britons slowly recovered their strength and courage, they gradually emerged from their hiding-places, and with one accord they prayed for the help of God that they might not be completely annihilated.*

When the current generation of the ruling family were killed, the next generation of this family carried on the resistance, for example three brothers, Constantine of Dumnonia, Ambrosius Aurelianus (460-479), and Uther Pendragon, later to be followed by a third generation, and even a fourth, consisting of Arthur in the 'Age of the Saints'. So far we have been concentrating on the western side of Great Britain, but now we were obviously skipping from the beginning of the Saxon invasion to the period of the great 'Age of the Saints', in Wales.

*People began to flee abroad (mainly to Brittany), to escape being slaves to the voracious newcomers. Others stood their ground under the leadership of Ambrosius Aurelianus, whose family were of Roman 'royalty' or the ruling class living at Amesbury in the central part of Britain. However on the death of their parents, the next generation of this family were on the front line of defence. Constantine, who ruled in the area of Cornwall and Devon, and King Perphirius living and ruling in what is today Glamorganshire, were not far from what is now Llantwit Major, at Bovium.*

However, he saw the urgency of moving up to Llandovery with his family, to be close to the gold mines - with his army to protect them.



The next generation of this family. Just as the old Roman station originally was heavily fortified by Roman soldiers, so also Uther Pendragon and his son Arthur after him were soldiers, Arthur becoming a great leader in the defence of Britain for that next generation. He was to secure for the country thirty years of comparative peace.

Meanwhile in the east of the country more and more Saxon invasions followed. Some of the family trees shown here give an idea of the terror for the indigenous people of Britain. The later criticism of them by the Roman church was that they should have been welcomed and taught the Christian Faith; however this harsh criticism seems hardly fair, for it would have been almost impossible at that time.

### **Author's apology to the reader.**

On the other hand this is just what Britain is doing today, it seems, just when all those world major faiths should be working together, to bring peace to our world with our one shared God, who has attempted to make Himself evident in those multiple parts of our world in a variety of languages over the millennia. I am writing today in London, while the Olympic Games are filling our television channels, and we can see how the whole world is taking part together in peaceful competition. Surely this is the beginning of a whole new world order which could be incredibly exciting.

It is thought that Urien and Arthur were fighting for Britain sometime towards the end of the fifth century.

Years ago my husband gave me a book, *The Quest for King Arthur* by David Day, foreword by Terry Jones, <sup>xxiv</sup> which I recommend. Saints Samson and Paul Aurelian both came from this region to emigrate to Brittany. Interestingly they were both trained from the age of five in St Illtud's monastery in Wales. Illtud was of course from Brittany and so they were familiar with it from an early age, although they may not have been contemporaries.

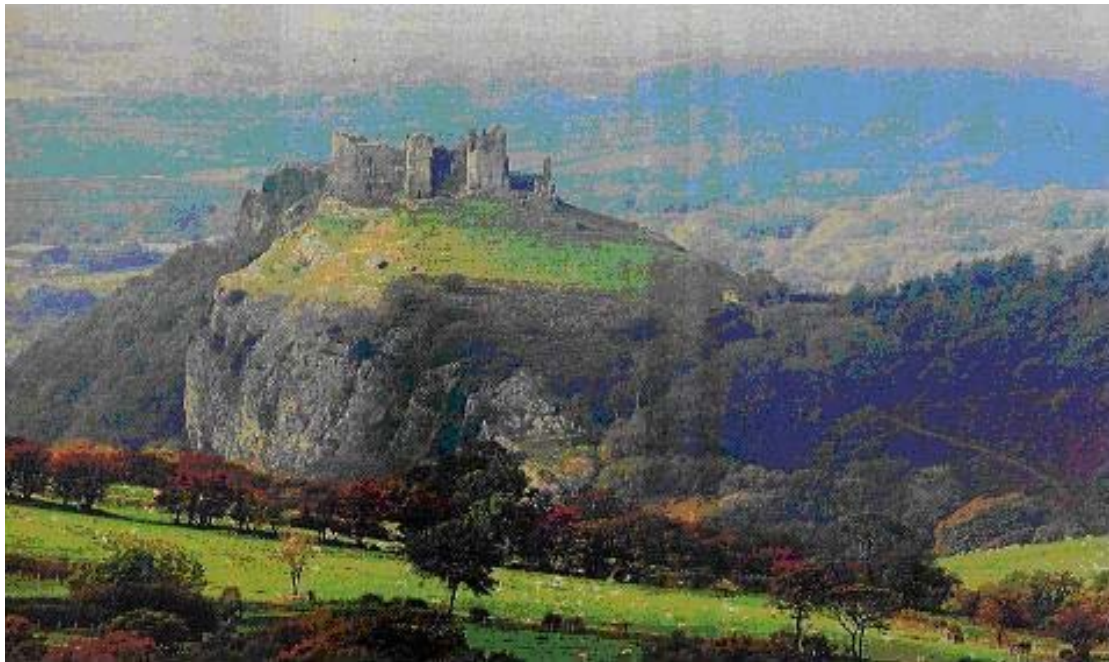
### Arthur

So much myth and history surround his name, but even today we remember Arthur as fighting twelve battles, and giving our beleaguered country a period of peace. The most significant battle has come down to us as 'Mons Badonicus', *mons means hill or mountain*, no one knows today exactly where mount Badon is, but this battle secured for Britain a period of peace for about three decades. Arthur is still remembered in Brittany, Britain, and Wales especially, where so many legends have evolved down the centuries, that it is difficult to know what could be history or legend. Wales does remember that the battles began when Arthur rode up with his mounted soldiers to help his cousin Urien, who was king in Reged, which was the western side of Northumbria from Carlisle down the coast to Wales, guarding the Celtic areas surrounding the Celtic sea, including the island of Anglesey, and the island of Man to which Arthur's sister Anna Madawg and her husband Llew (Urien's brother) were sent to guard it.

Arthur was known as the *Dux Bellorum* and his soldiers fought on horseback. The fighting started against the unruly Picts who lived here between two Roman walls, that of Hadrian, and the Antonine wall, where the tribe of the Gododdin (the northern people) lived. Ninian was born here, and it was to these people that he preached many years before Arthur's time. All along these Roman walls are forts, which may have been re-used by Arthur's fighting warriors. *Aneirin* the bard, living here at this time, composed that epic work called *The Gododdin* about the Celts of this northern region.

Urien's castle in Wales 'Carreg Cennen Castle', in the Black Mountains, west of the Brecon Beacons can still be seen here today.

They took as their symbol the Welsh Dragon, which is connected to a legend high on a mountain top in north Wales. It is still on our flag today! This is so bound up with Uther Pendragon and Carmarthenshire and Merlin and legends in my part of South Wales that I am tempted to spend too much time on them, and become diverted from the main line of this narrative. Arthur and Urien Rheged fought furiously in the north, before returning to Wales. Urien ruled also from Carreg Cennen at Llandeilo, and down to the sea at Gower in South Wales, where he was known as Urien de Gore. Dynevor Castle, the home of the Princes of the South of Wales, and the third close by at this time, Dryslwyn, guarded the valley from the south west of Dyfed to Carmarthen and was at this time the castle of King Aircol Lawhir of the Dynasty of Dyfed originally from Ireland. In my grandmother's

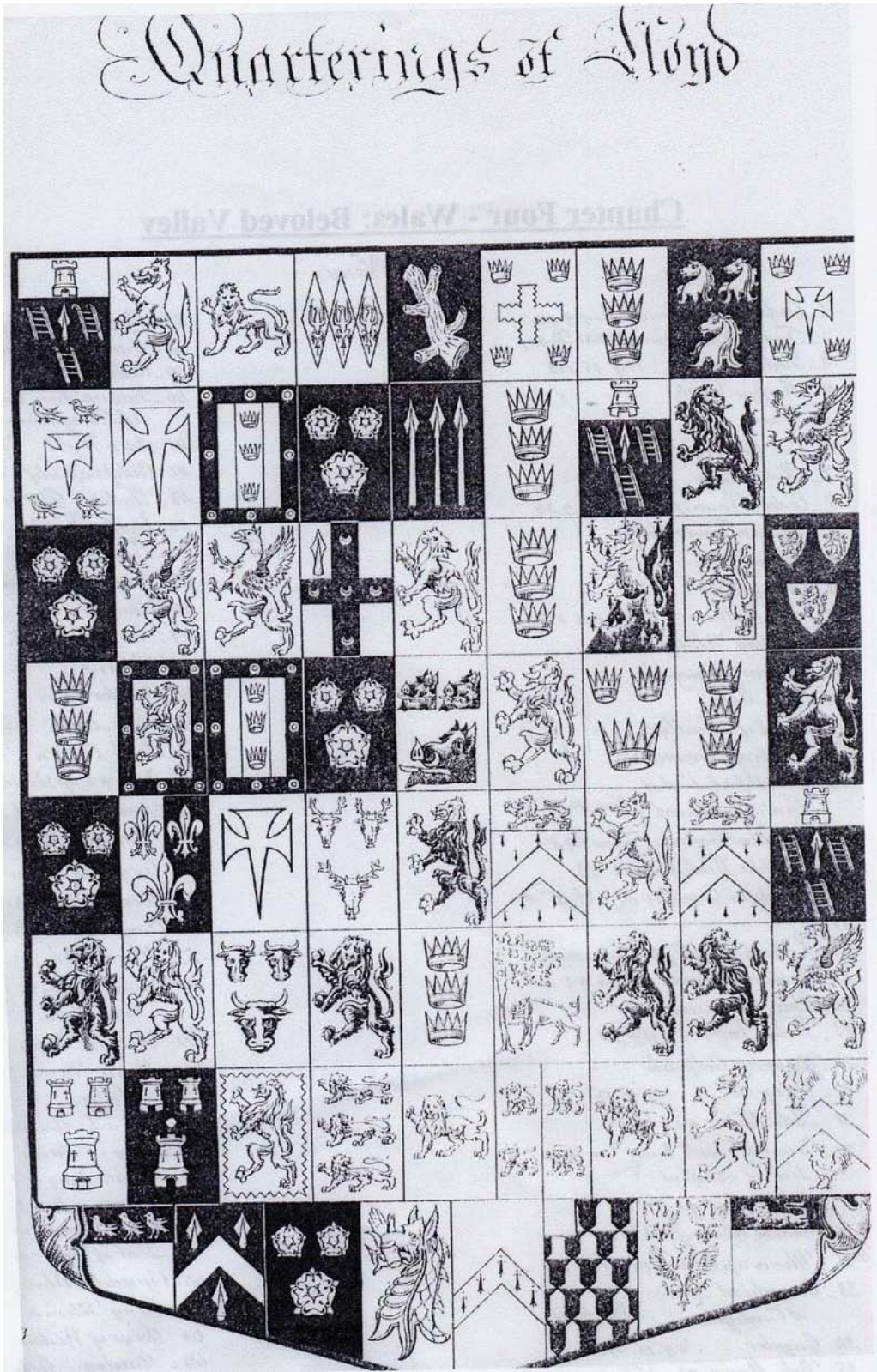


time she was brought up in the Farm and the ruined castle of Dryslwyn belonged to this farm; as a girl I would climb the castle and dream, and always I would come back there from London, to relate to it all my secret thoughts. It has always held a special place in my life, for it holds a timeless sense of mystery.

So much has been written about the Arthurian period that it is difficult to know just what to believe, however Urien and Arthur were real people, and it is thought that they were fighting to save Britain just before the sixth century, and thus gave Britain a period of peace for almost fifty years. In Wales this is known as the age of the saints, about which the English were unaware.

# Chapter Five

## WALES: BELOVED VALLEY



Names

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 - Cadifor ap Iwanell. . . . .      | 37 - Cynedda Wledig          |
| 2 - Tudwal Gloyf. . . . .            | 38 - Yner Iunges Gw.         |
| 3 - Redrick Mawr. . . . .            | 39 - Cadwalader as. . . . .  |
| 4 - Mestyn Vrych . . . . .           | 40 - Iees ap Iwan Iwan       |
| 5 - Gwaiv . . . . .                  | of Llangothen                |
| 6 - Cad Godeleg . . . . .            | 41 - Iolo Wylle . . . . .    |
| 7 - Beli Mawr . . . . .              | 42 - Cadiforap Ief . . . . . |
| 8 - Cadell Prince of Powis . . . . . | 43 - Tudwal Gloyf as         |
| 9 - Hyman Tyndalbury . . . . .       | 44 - Mestyn Vrych            |
| 10 - Tudwal Yuch . . . . .           | Lord of Cilcwm               |
| 11 - Cadwalader . . . . .            | 45 - Tudiforap Iwan          |
| 12 - Iaswallon . . . . .             | 46 - Phillips M.S. 2.        |
| 13 - Cynedda Wledig . . . . .        | 47 - Ier. Iwan ap Ier.       |
| 14 - Iudawr Bapogild . . . . .       | 48 - Wledig                  |
| 15 - Beli Mawr . . . . .             | 49 - Cadifor Iwan            |
| 16 - Lloyd of Stantlyn               | 50 - Beli Mawr as            |
| Cadiforap Iwanell } as. 171          | 51 - Iuch Iwan . . . . .     |
| 17 - Gwaethfed Lord of               | 52 - Iydyrch ap Iwan         |
| Cardigan Iseced } Iwan 180. 73       | 53 - Gwaethfed Lord of       |
| 18 - Gwyddelw Gornulur . . . . .     | Cardigan Iseced              |
| 19 - Cynedda Wledig as. . . . .      | 54 - Gwyddelw Gornul         |
| 20 - Gwyddelw Gornulur as. . . . .   | 55 - Howell Lord of Ca-      |
| 21 - . . . . .                       | mron Nain . . . . .          |
| 22 - Ier Griffith ap Iydar . . . . . | 56 - Howell Beli . . . . .   |
| 23 - Iyston Gledrydd . . . . .       | 58 - Cadell Prince of        |
| 24 - Beli Mawr as. . . . .           | South Wales . . . . .        |
| 25 - Tudor Iyfer . . . . .           | 59 - Redrick Mawr            |
| 26 - Iygr ap Cadfan . . . . .        | 60 - Iestyn Prince of        |
| 27 - Iydygern . . . . .              | Iseced                       |
| 28 - Beli Mawr as. . . . .           | 61 - Redrick Mawr            |
| 29 - Cynedda Wledig Iwan . . . . .   | 62 - Iwan as Iwan            |
| Lord of Iseced                       | 63 - Mawr King of            |
| 30 - Iaswallon as. . . . .           | 64 - Iwan Gled               |
| 31 - Cynedda Wledig as. . . . .      | 65 - Iaswallon Iydygern      |
| 32 - Iwan ap Ielwren . . . . .       | Lord of Gwynedd              |
| 33 - Gwaethfed Prince                | 66 - Cynedda Wledig          |
| of Cardigan } Iwan 180. 75           | 67 - Iwan Ielwren            |
| 34 - Iydyder . . . . .               | 68 - Iygr of Weston          |
| 35 - Beli Mawr as. . . . .           | 69 - Iaswallon Gled          |
| 36 - Edwin ap Tudwal . . . . .       | 70 - Iseced                  |
|                                      | 71 - Ialyfan                 |

The Quartering of Howard Mawr Lloyd of Llefyr Co. Carmarthen Esq.



The Romans set up the early British church, the Emperor Constantine declaring the Empire as Christian from York. We know that in the year 314 three Bishops were sent to Arles, to represent the British church, Eborius bishop of York, Restitutus bishop of London and Adelphus bishop of Caerleon (there is some dispute as to his area). The British bishops were so poor that they could not support themselves and had to accept hospitality from the heretic Emperor in 360 at Arminium (according to Sulpicius Severus). We call them the 'dark ages', since we are still finding out about them and because Roman occupation had ended when their armies returned to defend Rome, leaving their occupied lands in Britain vulnerable to attack from the Saxons in the east in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. Later still the Vikings in the 7<sup>th</sup> century would raid the monasteries, destroying and pillaging all around our massive coastline from the seas. Written evidence is however scarce, for our Celtic culture is ancient but an oral one, bardic families passing the wisdom on to their children. The bards, highly trained in their religious schools, committed everything to memory, their training starting early, but lasting until they were at least twenty years old. I will endeavour to trace some of the outstanding leaders, who rallied round to save their country in those succeeding few centuries, while various families, described below, settled in the Towy valley to protect those gold mines and to defend Wales.

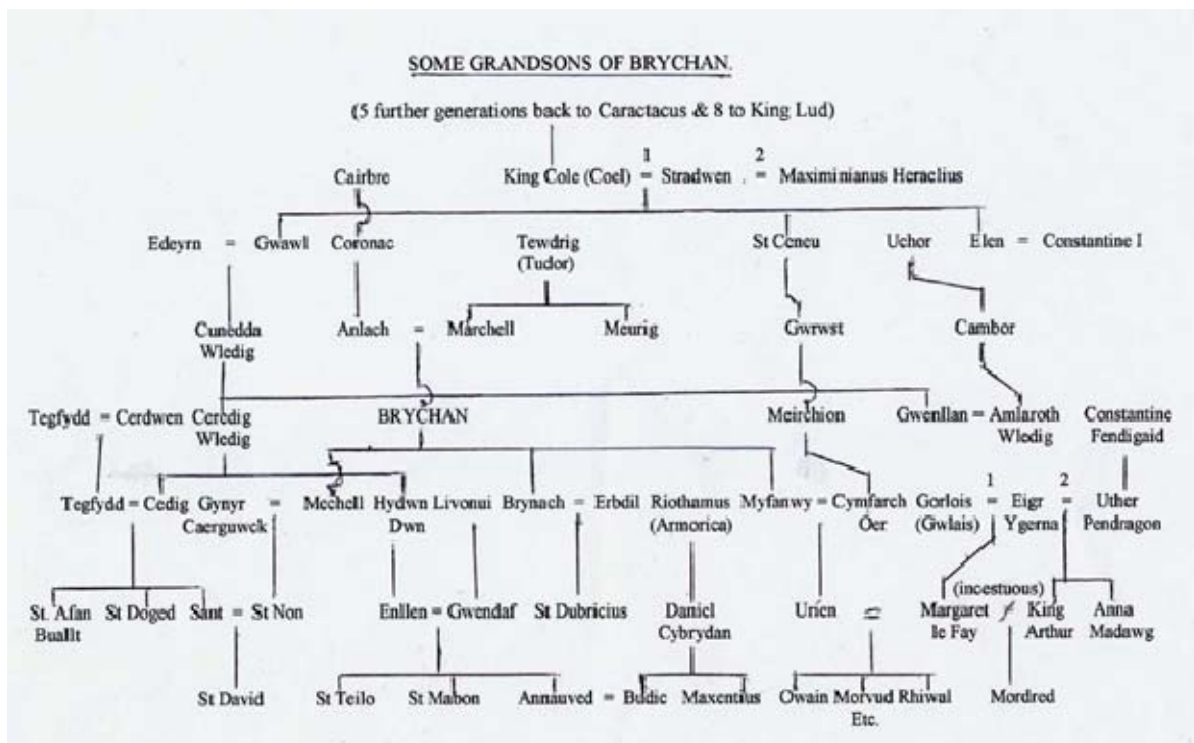
A crucial family before the Saxon invasion were the Romano-British rulers of the whole of Britain. Living near Amesbury, Ambrosius Aurelianus had been the Roman ruler of Britain; he was left behind when the soldiers marched with Magnus Maximus to Rome; Ambrosius and his wife are described as 'of the Purple' (i.e, of the ruling class); he had taken charge of the country, but, now that he had died, it fell to his three sons King Perphirius, Uther Pendragon and Constantine Aurelianus (or Fendigad) to defend Britain. Constantine, who ruled in Cornwall and Devon, had a son King Pebian of Archenfeld, who, according to Canon Doble writing in 1942, was grandfather to Dubricius, his daughter being Erbdyl, who married Brychan's son Brynach. To understand the situation in the country at that time we need briefly to sketch what we know so far.

Basically we need to go back two hundred years, for we need to focus on the years AD 400-600 generally. The Roman armies left Britain c. AD 410, when Ambrosius, described as ‘of the Purple’ (in other words of high Romano-British rank also), and living near Amesbury, was left in charge. Ambrosius’s three sons, Constantine, King Perphirius and Uther Pendragon were given charge of the west – Constantine in Cornwall and Devon, King Perphirius in Wales and Uther Pendragon as a soldier in charge of defending the British in the West, from Carlisle to the West Country.

Vortigern, being a Welsh Prince the son of Queen Elen and the Emperor Magnus Maximus, and therefore in charge, now invited the Saxons into Briton to help him to defend it, while his parents were in Rome. He thought that the Saxons would help him defend the country against those pagan hordes invading the continent; thus he gave them the Isle of Thanet to live in, whilst he married Rowena, the daughter of one of their two chiefs Hengist and Horsa, although he, Vortigern, already had his British wife.<sup>xxv</sup> Thus the Saxons now had a foothold in England, later gaining further territory in the north east of England and south east of Scotland. But in the north west the British still held the Kingdom of Strathclyde with its capital Dumbarton, and Rheged with its capital Carlisle, to the east of which was Manau Gododdin, the Kingdom of Cunedda Wledig, whose family came to defend Wales against the marauding Irish in St Patrick’s time - to remain in Wales. Those of this eastern Kingdom were thus diminished and left vulnerable to Saxon attacks, becoming the Kingdom of Deira and sometime later obliged to travel to the area around Bamburgh, to form the Kingdom of Bernicia by about AD 449, when the Angles also began their invasions, while Uther Pendragon was to father both Arthur, and Anna Madawg who married Llew, the brother of Urien Rheged. Llew ruled in the Orkneys, while Urien was originally based in Scotland near Strathclyde, to rule all Rheged down the west coast to Carreg Cennen, Loughor and the Gower peninsular. His son St Kentigern is commemorated in both Glasgow and St Asaph.

The Tribe of the Gododdin, living on the eastern side of Rheged, around Edinburgh (which later came to be named after Queen Bertha's son-in-law Edwin), and to the south of it, came down to help the beleaguered Western side of Wales; they murdered some of the Irish who were always crossing the Irish sea on the western coast, and much to Patrick's fury, also they inadvertently killed some of St Patrick's newly converted Irishmen who landed on the shores of Wales. This is the background to the tribe of the Gododdin who became so important in Wales from now on. Their leader was Cunedda Wledig and these warriors settled in west Wales and are still there. Mrs Blandy allowed me to copy her interesting family coat of arms with the following names which are also fascinating although rather faint unfortunately.

In Wales Brychan, partly of Irish descent, settled in mid-Wales near Llandovery and Llandeilo in what we call our 'Beloved Valley'. Brychan was to marry three times and have many children, all to become known as saints, his home here at Llys Brychan being on the mountain side near Carreg Cennan Castle and the village of Bethlehem. Another family tree can show many of those Christian saints of that next generation.



Wales: Beloved Valley So to sum up :- in South Wales –

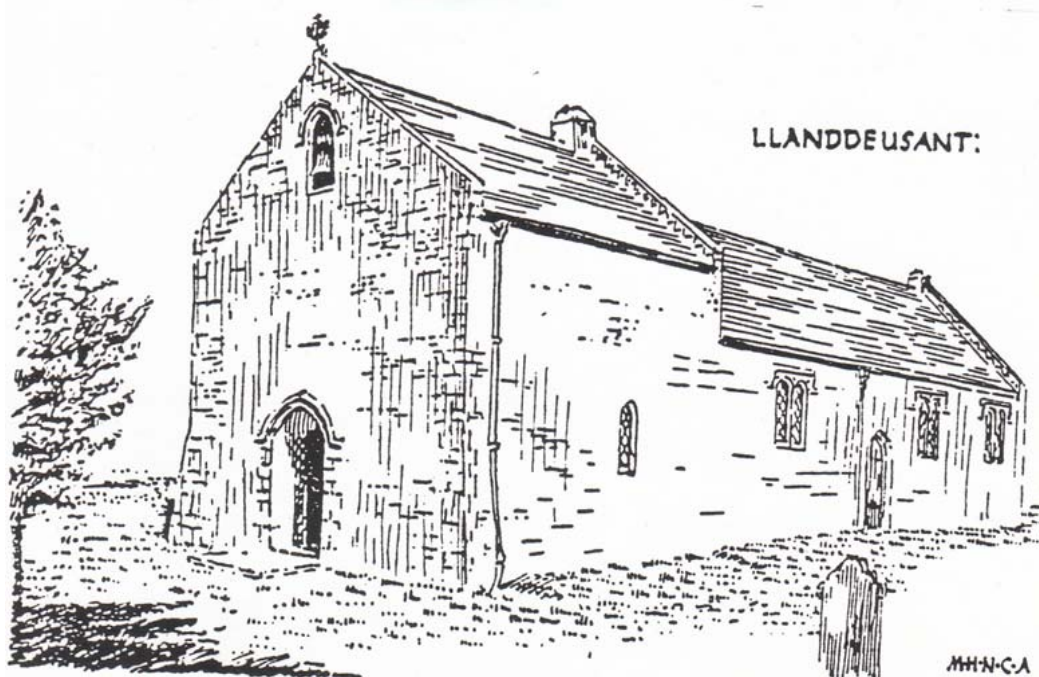


For clarity I will now attempt to describe where and what is the  
‘Beloved Valley’ and who played their part. 39

with Llandeilo Fawr at its centre and the Dolaucothi Gold Mines  
to the north, the Southern half of this valley includes Dynevor and  
Dryslwyn Castles. as guardians and protectors of the valley.

Ambrosius Aurelianus who lived at Amesbury, namely

King Perphirius, Uther Pendragon, and Constantine Fendigade  
Moved to Llandoverly (Cornwall and Devon)



King Perphirius moved with his family from Bovium in Glamorgan to Llandoverly. To Llwyn y Brain (the grove of the princes).

Llys Brychan, Brychan's home below Carreg Cennen Castle and Carn Goch Fort – near Llandeilo). Brychan married three times, many children and Grandchildren becoming the next generation of Christian saints. Some Grandsons of Brychan (on map above). Urien Rheged Strathclyde, in Scotland, Rheged, Cumbria, and in Wales from Carreg Cennen, down the river Cennen, to Loughor and Gower.

Dubricius Dubricius's monastery, Henllan housing 2000 monks in Herefordshire, & in overall charge of Christianity in Wales and the west, & Cornwall & Devon. Dubricius had innumerable cousins who became saints, for instance Teilo, David and many others, see Family Tree.

Also-Samson's parents:- Amman Ddu from Brittany married Anna from Glamorgan to live at Bryn Amman in the Black mountains, which become the Brecon Beacons further east. (Bryn=hill)

During the third century, an Irish tribe was expelled from Ireland to Pembrokeshire. The Irish Kings of Dyfed were King Pir, his son Aircol Lawhir who ruled from Dryslwyn and Grongar hill to guard the valley, and grandson Vortipor.

Background history of this tribe (The following is developed in the ‘Expulsion of the Deisi’ by K.Meyer in Y Cymmrodor XIV 1900) – The Irish descent of **King Aircol Lawhir, King of Demetia**. “*Eochaid, son of Artchorp, went over the sea with his descendants into the territory of Demed (Dyfed or Demetia) and it is there that his sons and grandsons died. And from them is the race of the Crimthann over there, of which is Teudor son of Regin, son of Aircol, son of Pyr also known as Triphun son of Aed Brosc, son of Corath, son of Eochaid Allmuir, son of Artchorp*”. By around 500 AD, Aircol became King of Demetia in Teilo’s time; it was named after one of Queen Elen’s sons, Demetrius. (This tribe, the Crimthann, along with most of Ireland, was converted by Saint Patrick). In South Wales the Irish tribe of the Deisi from Waterford landed in Dyfed and became the ruling class. They were led by men such as **King Pir**, who was to found both a monastery on what is now Caldey Island, but at that time was a peninsular, and another monastery on the coast at Llanelli.

**King Pir’s son, Aircol Lawhir** (long arm), known also as ‘Agricola’, travelled up the Tywi river, which has its mouth at Carmarthen, to take up a fortified position on Grongar Hill, behind and above Dryslwyn Castle on the river, in the middle of the valley, with its perfect view down river to protect it from invaders. At Llandeilo itself on the A40, there had been, since AD 70, an enormous Roman fort two thousand strong, defending the upper valley leading to the gold mines of Dolaucothi near Caio. At some later period this fort was reduced to normal size for 500 soldiers. It was from here, in Llandeilo, that the multiple Princes of South Wales at a later period built their castle at Dynevor, for both Dynevor and Dryslwyn were perfectly situated to defend the gold mines from the south.

**Ambrosius** himself had lived near in the centre of the country at Amesbury; his son Constantine took control and ruled in the south-west, that is to say in Cornwall and Devon. Ambrosius’s son Uther Pendragon was a soldier and his son Arthur, like his father, was to fight the invading Saxon forces and, at the battle of Badon around the turn of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, to win such a victory for the British people, that Arthur established a peace which was to last for fifty years. This has come to be known as the ‘Celtic

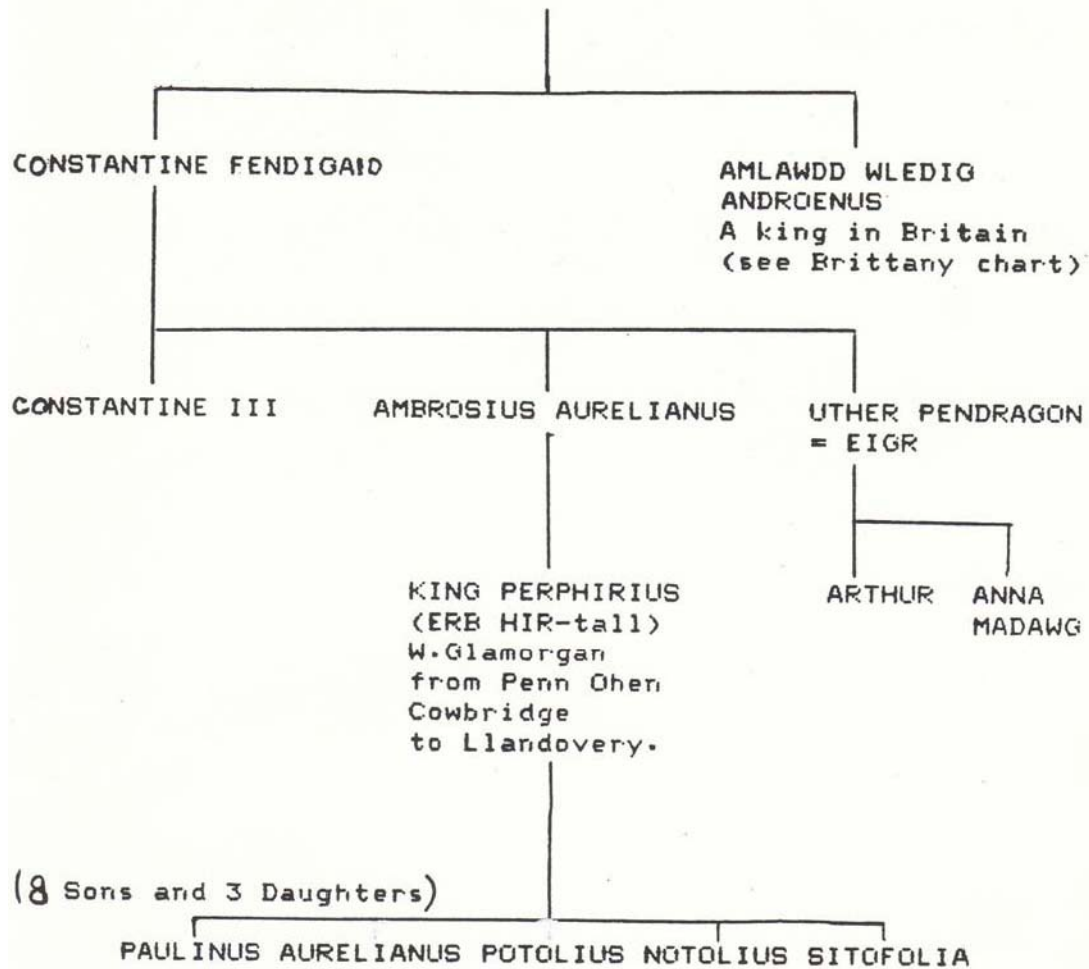
period’, when Christianity flourished in such a way that we are only now beginning to comprehend what a powerful force it became. We saw how Saint Martin supported and trained St Ninian, and how St Patrick, Martin’s nephew, followed him as Christian evangelists to Britain. St Patrick foresaw Saint David’s birth, which Rhygyfach tells us was thirty years before David was born. Patrick died in 461 and so we can safely say that David was born somewhere around the turn of the century or just before – for argument’s sake let us say c500 AD – perhaps a year or two before St Teilo.

**Ambrosius’s son King Perphirius**, reigning in the land around Bovium in Glamorgan at Cowbridge, moved to the area near Llandovery, where today Llwyn y Brain stands, to raise his family – on the opposite side of the Tywi valley to Llys Brychan. (His son, St Paul Aurelian, grew up to be a famous saint in Brittany). This interesting period becomes ever more fascinating the deeper one delves, for we find ourselves standing on the doorstep, not simply of myth and romance, but of the real history both of Wales and of our faith. It is clear from the proximity of Llys Brychan to Llwyn y Brain (The grove of the princes), that the two families grew up knowing each other, whereby they became a strong binding force in our strategic history of Wales. As the goal of many of the invaders were the gold mines of Dolaucothi, situated above Llandovery in the heart of our Welsh countryside, this area had to be defended at all costs, while the Saxons were pressing ever westwards. Incidentally by leaving Glamorgan, King Perphirius was to reinforce the Christian presence there, where the former soldier St Illtud eventually took over and developed the enormous Christian monastery housing 2000 monks; it had been originally founded by Germanus of Auxerre, from an earlier foundation of St Donat, to which King Perphirius was to send his son, St Paul Aurelian, for training at the age of five; Paul was also known as Potolius, who founded Pol de Leon in northern Brittany. When he grew up, Paul Aurelian, who had for some time now established his monastery at Llandeusan in the hills facing his parents’ home across the valley, felt called to travel to Cornwall to the court of King Mark. Taking with him a party of twelve of his followers, and leaving Llandeusan monastery in the care of his

brethren, Paul set off from their home, probably towards the end of the fifth century. Perhaps he took with him his sister Sitofolia also, for she was to set up a religious house by the sea in Cornwall, whilst Paul Aurelian eventually crossed the sea to Brittany with his companions; where in northern Brittany he is well remembered to this day at Pol de Leon.

It was to St Illtud's monastery at a similar age to Paul Aurelian that St Samson was sent to train. His father was a great landowner from Brittany, who married Anna from Glamorgan, both his parents being court officials to King Aircol Lawhir, known as 'Agricola', the Christian king of Demetia in south Wales and son of King Pir from Ireland. King Aircol Lawhir lived near Dryslwyn Castle, on the higher hill known as 'Grongar hill', and just across the valley from Samson's family at Bryn Amman in the Black Mountains, to the south of Carreg Cennen Castle.

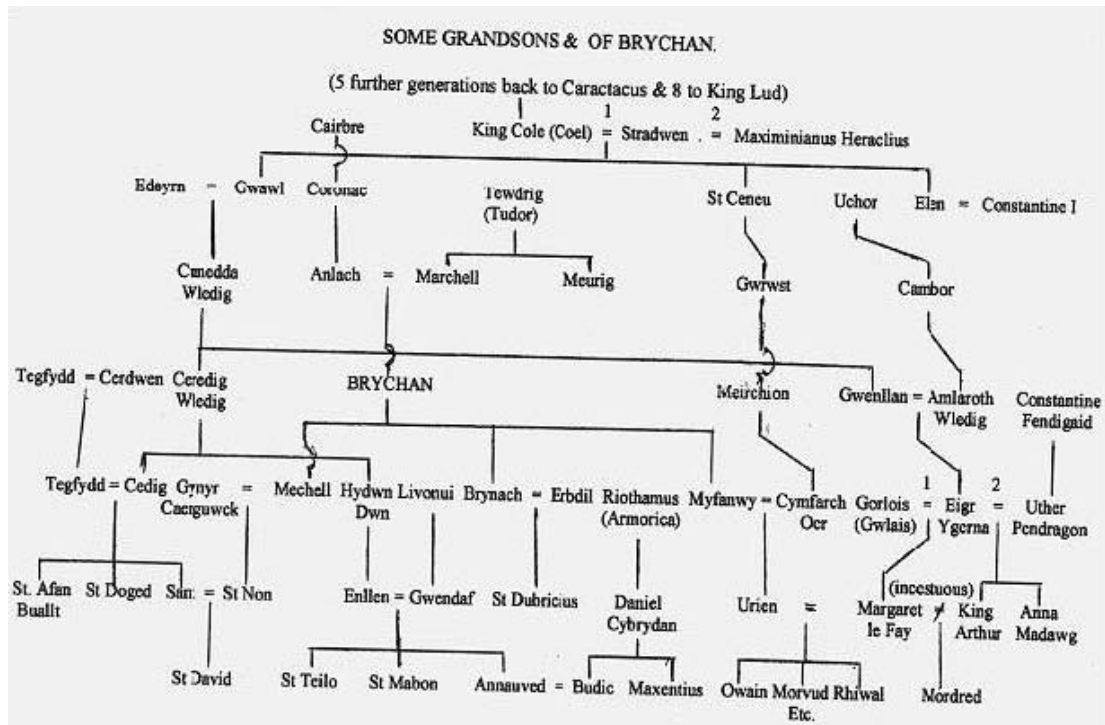




**Ammon Ddu was a son of Emyr Llydaw, Queen Elen's brother** who did not return to Wales with Elen after Magnus Maximus's assassination, but rather decided to settle in Brittany. Ammon Ddu was also a grandson of St Patrick's sister (see family tree page 37). He was the father of St Samson.

*'Peregrinati' (means those in danger) – whose destiny and mission was to leave all and go out into the unknown for God.'*

Many from Brittany (little Britain) came to Britain, and many more went over from Britain to Brittany to escape the dangers in Britain. In Brittany Illtud and Brioc prayed for Wales. Later Illtyd and Ammon Ddu (Samson's father), and Brioc came to Britain. Brychan was of Irish/Welsh stock living in mid-Wales.



**Brychan's daughter Myfanwy married Cynfarch Oer**, who was of the royal Scottish line of Ceredigion. There were two sons: **Urien**, known also as Urien Rheged, King of Strathclyde and Rheged, father of St Kentigern known as St Mungo, who founded St Asaph. Urien was also known as Urien de Gore, since Gower came under his jurisdiction, probably ruling from Loughor and Carreg Cennen Castle (the territory known as Is Cennen which bordered the eastern side of the river Cennen). In a solicitor's office in Llandeilo there is an old map which includes the road called Rheged, leading from St Teilo's Church down the hill and over the river Tywi, where the suspension bridge is today. The road leads up to Carreg Cennen Castle. Urien's territory swept down Rheged on the west from Strathclyde, where his title Urien Rheged is recognised. 2) Another son was **Llew (or Lot), brother of Urien** who became King of Orkney and married Anna Madawg, sister of 'King' Arthur. He guarded and kept open the western seaways with their incipient threat from the Irish in the Waterford area of Ireland, who had already conquered Dyfed. The King of this Irish tribe of the Desi, was Pyr (Pir), who became abbot of Caldey Island, with his son the good Christian king Aircol Lawhir, followed by his wayward grandson Vortipor, castigated by Gildas. 3) A third grandchild of Brychan was **Cadoc**, son of his daughter Gwladys and Gwynllew, King of

Glamorgan, Cadoc is commemorated at Llancarvon also housing some 2000 monks. 4) A fourth was his daughter **Non**, who married King Sant they were parents of Dewi Sant, or Saint David. One could go on. However there remained an ever present necessity for protection around those Welsh gold mines and several other powerful families gathered in the vicinity in order to bring such to the valley below; thus we note that Brychan, who also had Irish blood, came to settle near Llandeilo close to the village of Bethlehem today, at Llys Brychan with his large family, most of whom were destined to become saints. Brychan's eldest son saint **Cynog**<sup>xxvi</sup> was conceived when Brychan, still a teenager, was sent by his father to live with the King of Powys as a hostage. We are told that Brychan had a son by Banadiue, the daughter of Benadel. The baby was taken away for baptism, and afterwards Brychan put an armilla (or bracelet) from his own arm, and put it on his son's. This bracelet was to become a precious relic in the area. Brychan was married firstly to Praust, secondly to Ribraust,<sup>xxvii</sup> and thirdly to Prostri,<sup>xxviii</sup> who was Spanish. Of the twenty-three children by his wives, many are remembered today as founding saints all over Devon, Cornwall and Wales. **Tydfyl** for instance was a martyr and she is remembered at Merthyr Tydfyl in Wales. Just one generation further back reveals the formidable Irish connection, for Brychan himself was the son of Anlach (an Irish chief) and Marchell, the daughter of Tewdrig (the Tudor king of Welsh Garthmadrin). Grandfather Brychan's home was at Llys Brychan, under the Black Mountains, near our former cottage in Llandeilo. What remains of his house is below the great Iron Age fort of Garn Goch, which probably housed many slaves, there to work in the gold mines (some perhaps from the Spanish gold mines at Rio Tinto). Brychan's twenty-three children certainly covered a wide age range,<sup>th</sup> making it difficult to place them in any time sequence in that 5<sup>th</sup> century. They married into important families of the period, whilst those who did not marry were to found several Christian communities.<sup>xxix</sup> In short, Brychan and his children and grandchildren appear all over the place. I can list a few perhaps. It is quite incredible that the family was to include men and women of deep spirituality, as well as active participants

in the defence of the land such as Urien and Arthur. Each one of them require a whole book to themselves, however my brief is on behalf of the initial project by St Martin of Tours to save the Christian enterprise for Britain. The legacy of St Martin was now reaping rewards, as help came to Wales from Brittany in the form of soldier monks and the British defences were strengthened by the Bretons and Irish

## Chapter Six

### St Paul Aurelian and St Samson

We must now turn to two of our earliest *Lives* of the Welsh Saints, that of Paul Aurelian who founded Saint Pol de Leon and Samson who founded Dol; both of these are in northern Brittany. I deal with them in my book on Saint Teilo, written in 1995, since when, I repeat, I have learnt so much more. Both Paul Aurelian and Samson from the age of five had been trained in the monastery of St Illtud at Llanilltud Fawr in Glamorgan. Illtud himself came from Brittany and it is reasonable to accept that they would have turned to him for advice, before they took their leave of Wales.

Nor are we led to believe that Paul and Samson left Wales at the same time; in fact they separately received the call from God to leave all for His sake, to live as ascetics in close communion with Him – but their family backgrounds were quite different; Paul was Romano-British, while Samson's father Amwn Du from Brittany (see Family Tree page ?), who married Anna from Glamorgan. Both were officials in the court of Aircol Lawhir, who was the son of King Pyr, of Irish/Welsh stock and ruling at this time in Dyfed (Demetia), that is to say south-west Wales from Pembrokeshire to the Towy River.

*It is recorded that Paulinus (Aurelianus) and his 12 disciples were ordered to visit the local chieftain Marcus at Villa Bannedos – in Porthrhyd. There were 40,000 soldiers garrisoned in the Pumpsaint area at that time – of recent years however, the money has been spent at Caerwent – yet Pumpsaint has not been credited with being such an important outpost, when Caerwent was only a barracks.*

When Magnus Maximus left Wales to become Emperor in Rome, the fort at Caio must have been severely depleted, for he took most of the young men in Wales with him to Rome. Whilst the gold mine was under Roman control, one can imagine it was a thriving concern. There had been a fort to house the soldiers in Pumpsaint, where a public house now stands. This fort was replaced by workshops and very skilled workers, who turned the gold into precious jewelry, with stones also, brought into the area by sea from foreign countries. The Gospel Book itself probably

had covers also with precious stones thereon. The skilled workers were the finest craftsmen, and the gold was of the very best. Today even our Queens in this country have wedding rings made therefrom.

Paul being King Perphirius's heir had been trained by St Illtud in his monastery, and was clearly at the age when he had to decide his future. This without doubt was not as a soldier but as a monk. From now on he set his plans to follow his calling.

Work at the gold mine may have declined from now on, so that those soldiers who remained must have largely been transferred to Caerwent from now on.

Paul seemingly left home with his followers some time before Samson, who finding that although he was appointed Abbot of Caldey Island, the monks found him too strict; also at Llanilltud Fawr, founded by St Illtud, Illtud's nephews were jealous of him, for they considered it was their inheritance; in despair he retreated to seek God's guidance, to the then island of Machynis, now part of the mainland of Llanelli town. Finally he departed for Brittany, having taken leave of his parents, Anna and Ammwn Du and his siblings at Bryn Amman. This was a journey from which he planned to make no return. The Welsh movement of Teilo's friends into Brittany was via Cornwall, Devon and the Scilly Isles. Dubricius inherited this area for the overall pioneering work, which he inherited for the Church.

It is of interest also, since Constantine, brother of Uther Pendragon and King Perphirius, was Dubricius's Grandfather reigning in the West Country. Although Constantine was certainly not a Christian as a youth, he later did convert, emigrating to Ireland to withdraw from society as a monk.

Paul had been called to stay with King Mark Conomorus, who ruled both in Brittany where he was called 'Great Dog'! and at Lantyan in Cornwall, where he became a Christian. He was the husband of Iseult (Isolda).

However one could reasonably suggest that Paul Aurelian would want to say a final farewell to places and people that he knew he would never see again, even if it meant taking a circuitous route. One may imagine that Paul Aurelian set out with a stout heart. Of

his initial twelve companions Tigernomalus (Dyrfal), Hercanus, Lowenamus and Bretowennus (Brydwen) were but a few. The little party set out from 'Llandeusant' (the church of the two saints), his monastery high on the ridge of hills opposite his father's home near Llandovery; taking with them only his sister Sitofolia, they left Potolius and Notolius (his brothers) in charge of the thriving monastery.

Their final farewell to the land of their birth might have taken them via the Roman road, which dropped down the hillside at Trecastle near Brecon, crossing through to Dubricius's great teaching monastery Henllan (on the Herefordshire border). Here they might have stayed a day or two for consultation and preparation, before Paul's mission by invitation to the court of his uncle King Mark at Lantyan.

On the way from Henllan, they could well have deviated south to Glastonbury, an abbey based on the first embryonic foundations of the early British Christian church (where St Patrick had longed to be buried), as did St David later, he built a little church there. To reach Glastonbury he would have had to pass Arthur's stronghold on south Cadbury, and climb up to the steep entrance to enter into the fort through the massive gateway, where Arthur had closely identified the British with the Christian cause five hundred years after Glastonbury was founded. Here in his great stronghold was a large cruciform church. One may visualise their warm greetings for, although their methods of Christian warfare were different, their cause was the same. Hardly however could two men of the same family have differed more, Paul being young, lean and earnest, but his uncle, Arthur, in full manhood, commanding and tough. Paul to stay with him at Lantyan, where Paul later converted Mark, formerly the scourge of Brittany, to Christianity.

After this protracted farewell to his native country and, leaving his sister Sitofolia in Devon, where she founded a monastery, Paul and his party set sail towards Brittany (via the Scilly Isles), but he was not to stay there long, pressing on to the coast of Brittany. I quote now from the *Life* of Paul Aurelian written by Wrmonoc, a Breton monk.

“Being on fire with love of the heavenly kingdom, Paul first

reached an island called Ossa, about sixteen miles off the Breton coast, to land at the 'Port of the Oxen', where he found a little fountain with the ground around it fresh and green. Here he built a small shelter for prayer, but eventually landed on the mainland at Ploudalmezeau, where they found a deserted farm with a clear sweet bright spring. The place was known as the Villa Petri and here he built a little church... Tired after one long journey, he saw a deserted villa – the Villa Wormawi – deserted since the Romans had departed, although not entirely reverted to nature. He decided to find out how the country was governed. He came upon a swineherd who told him he was one of the swineherds of a Count named Withurs, a Christian man who ruled the country according to the Christian religion under the emperor named Childebert. The swineherd eventually led the party to the island of Batz, where Paul met Count Withurs and, discovering him to be a relative of his, found they had much in common. Count Withurs had retired to the island in order to withdraw from society. Here they found him transcribing the last words of the Gospel Book. Withurs, foreseeing many difficulties for Paul, sent him with sealed letters to King Philibert (Childebert) in Paris. Paul took twelve presbyters with him and everywhere they stayed they built a little church. The sealed letter asked the King to make Paul a bishop, 'Even against his will', which the King duly did and also gave Paul gifts of money and land for a church. Paul returned and remained at Leon, until he was old and ready to retire to the island of Batz, which Count Withurs had given him in perpetuity.

Both Paul and Samson were to become famous for their work in Brittany. Both originally travelled there in order to seek solitude and live lives of prayer, far from the worldliness of the life they were seeing around them.

Samson had by now become a traveller or peregrinatus for Christ's sake. He travelled with two horses harnessed to that chariot, which the Irish had given him to carry his books, and there are many stories about his time, where both in Wales and in Cornwall Samson encountered strange heathen practices. However finally he left Cornwall and stayed for a while in the Isles of Scilly on his way to Brittany, where one island is named after him; he also spent a considerable time in Guernsey on his way to Dol,



which was to become his headquarters for the rest of his life. Saint Samson's *Life* was written in his monastery a generation after his death; it is the earliest *Life* of a Welsh saint that we have, in which we also learn a great deal about Saint Dubricius too. Unfortunately we do not have dates to help us during this period, so that I am relying on circumstantial evidence at this point. Similarly later, like Paul Aurelian, Samson was required to visit Charibert (? Charibert II), the King in Paris, when he arrived to set up his foundation at Dol and, incidentally, many other churches en route, including several further south, as he returned from Paris. Incidentally we should not forget that Samson's grandfather was Emyr Llydaw, so that his father's family originated in Brittany.

We are not told in their *Lives* that either Paul and his companions or Samson visited Tours, although they must have been aware of St Martin's influence on their monastic lives; however it is not impossible that their return journeys would have included a visit to Marmoutier, the burial place of St Martin. Another consideration is that, if they did travel to Marmoutier did they have any contact with the young Princess Bertha who was living with her mother at Marmoutier? And if they did, was that connection maintained with her mother after Bertha's marriage to King Ethelbert? Sadly we do not know but many of those at Queen Bertha's school with me would have loved to find out!

Later however, when the Yellow fever visited Wales in 547 AD, Teilo's friends and compatriots were already established in Brittany and able to help the fleeing Welsh shepherded by St Teilo and others, to settle there for seven years and seven months, until the fever was judged to have thoroughly abated and it was safe to return to Wales; however many also continued to stay to live in Brittany, possibly judging it better and/or safer than returning to Wales, indeed where perhaps all their family may have died in the plague. So today we find close ties between the Bretons and the Welsh, who also incidentally understand each others' language.

## Chapter Seven

### Saint Dubricius

**Brynach** became tutor to Brychan's many children, so that it is not at all surprising that they all appear to have become saints or missionaries. Brynach travelled to Rome to study like many young men of means. He married (probably Erbdyl) whose son was

<sup>xxx</sup>  
Dubricius. I Quote: *Brynach, Abbot. A hermit who settled in Pembrokeshire, Brynach was apparently of Irish origin. He was said to have visited Rome and Brittany before landing in Wales at Milford Haven. From there he travelled to Llanboidy, Cilamaenllwyd and Llanfrynach (all places with churches dedicated to him), eventually settling at Nevern. There he lived a life of extreme asceticism, spending hours in prayer on Carn Ingli, the mountain above his cell. Local traditions about Brynach also mention his close relationship with the natural world, befriending and taming wild animals, and being able to converse with the birds. He represents a strand of early Welsh Christianity that reflects similar ideas and ideals to those of Francis of Assisi.*

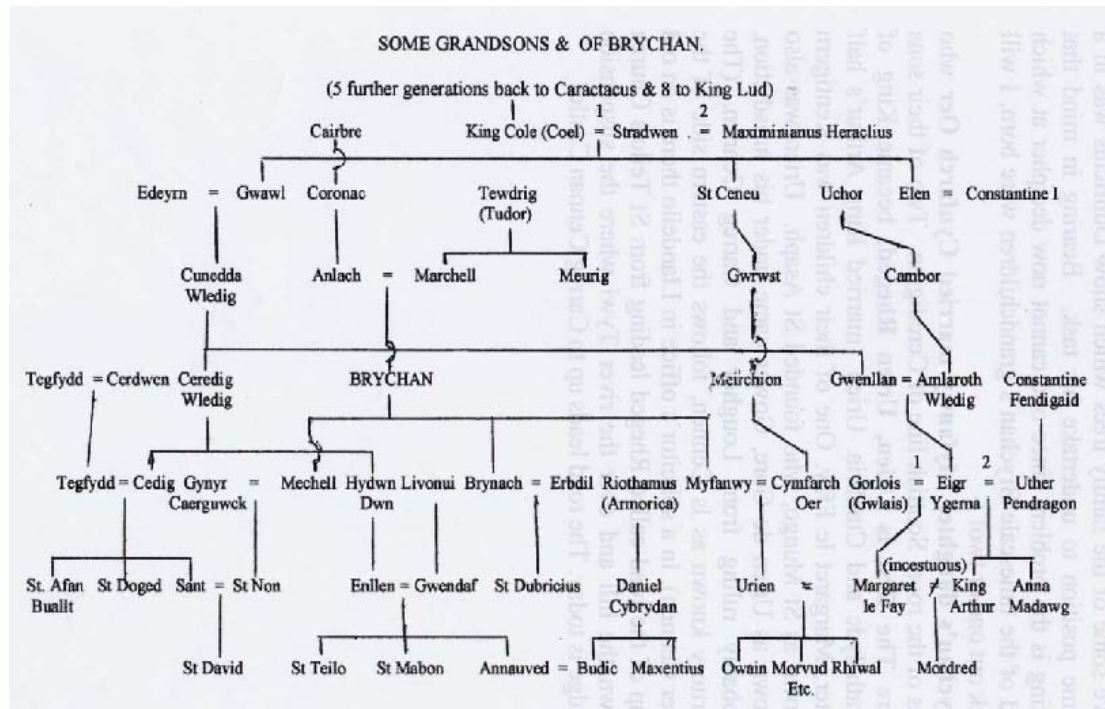
**Dubricius** may have been the eldest grandson of Brychan. If this is truly so, Dubricius would have had much prayerful support from his father Brynach, to enable him to carry out such a life of service to God as he did.

Dubricius was in a key position, dealing with his multiple aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces! – to devote his life to developing that vibrant Christian movement here in western Britain for the Celtic world.

His mother was Erbdyl whose father was King Pebian of Archenfeld, son of King Constantine of Devon and Cornwall,

<sup>xxxi</sup>  
Ambrosius's son. We can see from the following catalogue also how St Dubricius was related to most of the ruling families in the country, for we now have some of the family trees which show that he was in a prime position to undertake his task. In a little historical delight we find Dubricius's mother is named on the map in a little stream named 'Erbdyl', near Llandovery, close to Talaris (house) just off the Roman road A40.

Like his grandfather Brychan, he set out to concentrate on the next generation for Christ. He did not marry, but was to found the great Celtic monastic movement with a major training monastery at



Henllan, near Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. His influence on the next generation, indeed on the future of the Welsh church, was to be profound; his students included, his nephews Teilo, David and Cadoc, and many others, for Dubricius was in charge of the pioneering monastic work - throughout south Wales, Devon and Cornwall.

But what we know of St Dubricius was first written down only in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in the earliest (almost contemporary) 'Life of St Samson', by the monk Henoc after Samson's death. Dubricius had consecrated Samson as Bishop, before Samson went to Dol in Brittany. Henoc the priest was much concerned with his master Samson's 'Life', so that what we have received from his writing usually relates to the stories in which Dubricius touched the life of Samson; it is contemporary and therefore we can trust it. So, having overloaded you with the background of Welsh Christian families, let us therefore look at the man who became a great teacher, training so many great men indeed, like Teilo and Dewi and Cadoc to take over from him.

In Wales each year Dubricius would retire to Caldey Island for

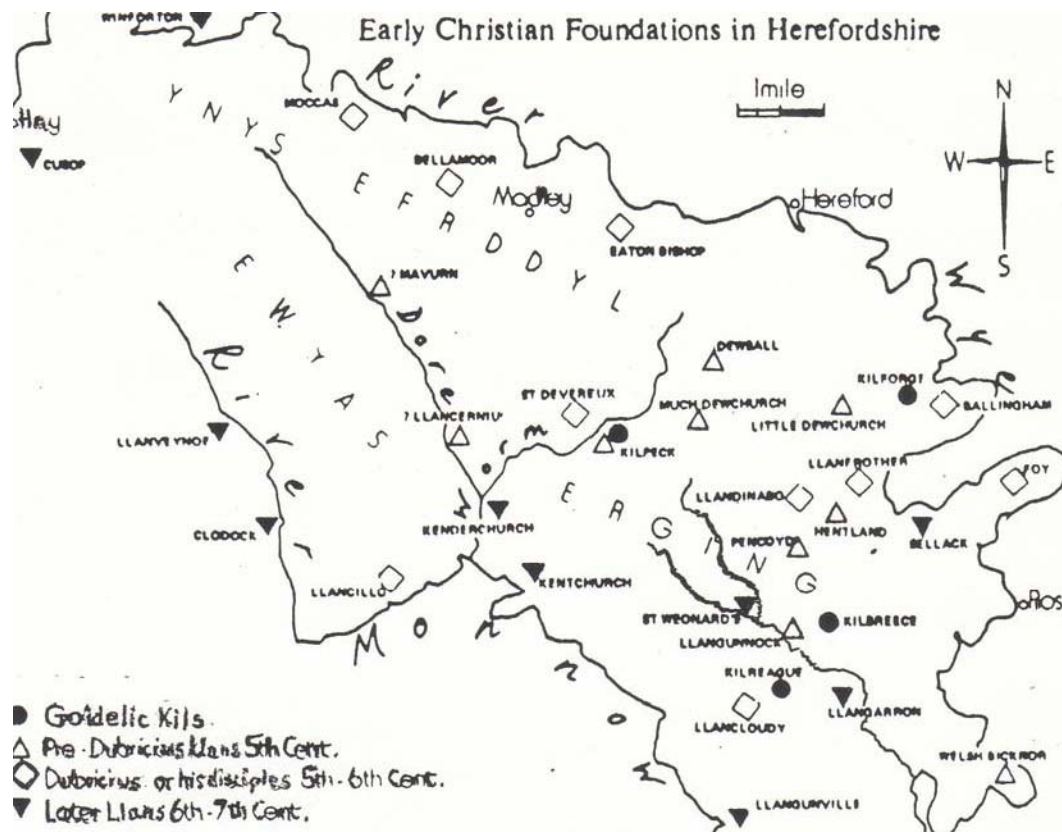
Lent, where he had a summer residence and, surrounded by young men, including some of his closest young nephews such as David and Teilo, who were descended from the family of Ceredig Wledig as well as from Brychan's family, he would lead a Lenten retreat. The youths would work in the fields during the day, with a structured programme afterwards of prayer and study of the Scriptures, drawing closer to God.

It is worth recalling that this special grandson of Brychan, Dyfrig or St Dubricius, (known as St Devereux to the later Normans in the twelfth century in Wales), gained his Roman name, because he was living in a heavily Roman district of Britain. Hereford was near Caerleon, where the Romans had built an early fort and, since the same Roman soldiers who guarded St Paul in Rome were sent for duty to Caerleon shortly after, this was possibly a very early Christian area, at a time almost contemporary with Our Lord. Also perhaps this is the origin of the *St Paul Legend* to which I referred in my opening chapter, for it certainly could be true that he accompanied his captors to Britain, since there seem to be two missing years from prison in Rome, for St Paul in Scripture, before he was put to death in Rome.

In Welsh we call Dubricius 'Dyfrig' (meaning water bearer), a particularly significant name for him because his grandfather Brychan (on his father's side) founded Brecon on the Usk, which flows out to sea at Caerleon. He was brought up in Herefordshire, near a tributary of the Wye, the river Monow. Rivers were the safer form of travel than roads, since the Romans had left. He was also reputed to own land on his father's side on the rivers Severn and Wye. Furthermore water, being the Christian symbol for Baptism, spiritual refreshment, cleansing and healing, was very meaningful to St Dubricius. In Welsh we call him Dyfrig (meaning water bearer), a particularly significant name for him because his grandfather Brychan (on his mother's side) founded Brecon on the Usk, which flows out to sea at Caerleon. Dubricius was also reputed to own land at Caerleon, while on his father's side he owned land on the rivers Severn and Wye, the rivers being safer forms of travel than roads since the retreat of the Roman army— and indeed they were the main form of communication in those days.

‘St Dyfrig’ to the Welsh, in his work for Christ extending and developing the Christian Monastic movement in the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 7<sup>th</sup> century in south-western Britain.

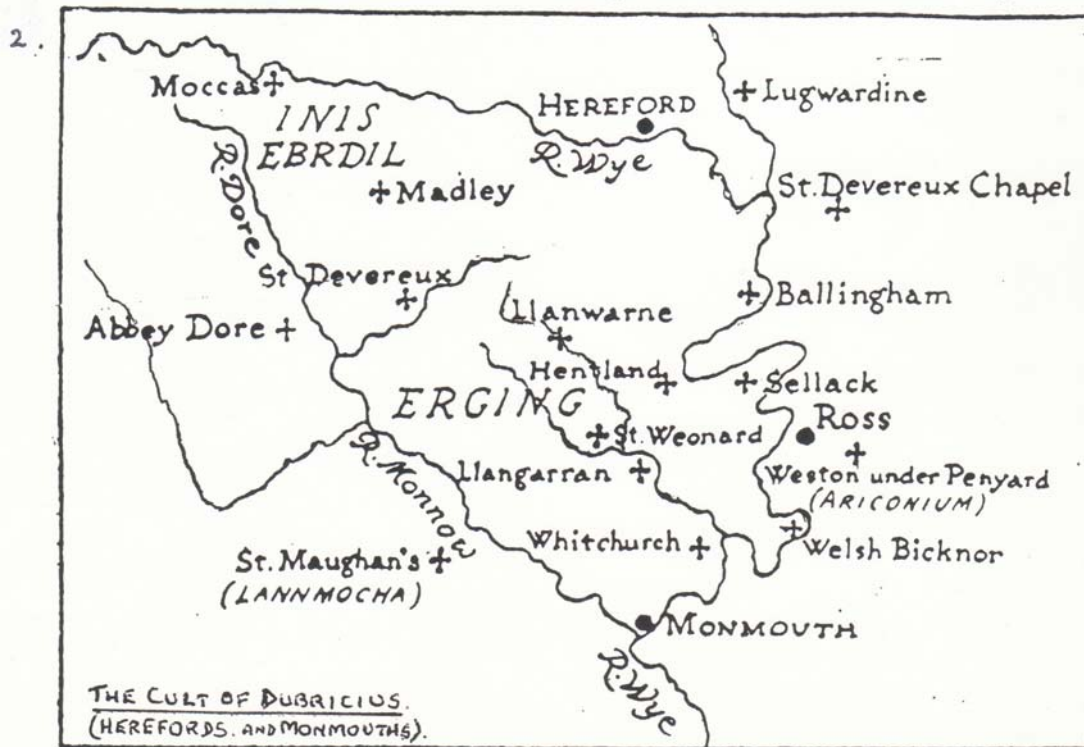
Who then trained Dubricius for this important work? It was Germanus of Auxerre from Gaul, in France. We are told that in an earlier mission to Britain, it was St Germanus and St Lupus who appointed St Dubricius as archbishop over the whole of Southern Britain, putting Dubricius in charge of the Christian monastic movement in the south-west of Britain. Later Dubricius in his turn,



trained St Teilo to succeed him. We are in fact witnessing the ‘follow-up’ of St Martin’s care and concern for Britain, just as the Roman church was personified by Germanus who died about 448 AD, came to Britain to deal with Pelagianism in 425, and again in 440 AD; he had been sent to crush the heresy together with Lupus, who must have been considerably younger than Germanus of Auxerre. Germanus also sent Isernius, and another, to help Patrick in his rapidly increasing work in Ireland and they probably came over in the same party as Germanus and Lupus. They would have taken ship from the continent and sailed to what is now Pembrey, before travelling inland. Even today St Illtud’s church stands there close by at Pembrey. There is mention of Isernius in the

Llanegwad area near Dryslwyn Castle in South Wales, and I like to believe that Isernius might have been billeted on my family farm, at Dryslwyn Fawr, in haste to join Patrick in Ireland, but breaking his journey in my small world! Llan Hernin, in Llanegwad, was indeed founded by Isernius, perhaps the earliest dedication in our area. Nennius describes this time, when Germanus stayed in Britain for a more prolonged period.

MAP 2 (below) according to Michael Mountney.



Bearing in mind that dating is the problem, since one cannot now decipher at which end of the timescale Brychan's descendants were born, there simply is not room enough to include all the names on his much shortened family tree, even if we knew them all. I will select just three; a grandchild and two great grandchildren. 'It was all in the family' so to speak, and so it is important to bear in mind that his grandson Dubricius was in a key position, dealing with his aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces! – to develop that vibrant Christian movement in western Britain for the Celtic world.

His nephews Teilo and David often worked together both in the west of Wales and elsewhere, Teilo's chief monastery being Llandeilo Fawr, although he founded numerous others and, of course, David was to found St David's as his main foundation, amongst twelve others or more. Dubricius taught them also at his chief monastery of Henllan the knowledge of letters and of wisdom, divine and human, showing himself a pattern of religious life and perfect charity. The teaching would have included the normal Classical education of Latin and Greek (vital for reading the Bible of course), Astronomy, which is how they navigated, Logic, Mathematics, Rhetoric and all branches of Philosophy, (all subjects included in a normal Roman education) and, in addition, the Old and New Testament and much more e.g. setting up a self sufficient monastery with a fully organised life there, Illtud for instance inventing an improved plough to increase the harvests!

Dubricius must have travelled great distances, covering Cornwall and Devon also, to encourage so many family members. Brychan's family tree (necessarily limited and partial for lack of space and knowledge) perhaps helps the reader to understand this. One can imagine the monasteries working hard to train young men as monks; time was short, since it was to be barely two hundred years before Wales was defeated.

Meanwhile even today, names such as Arthur and his father Uther Pendragon are still remembered. So we find St Dubricius closely involved in the action through his grandfather Brychan. <sup>xxxiii</sup> We are now into the sixth century, when Brychan's grandchildren have come of age, perhaps Dubricius's busiest time. He gathered the younger men of the family together into his monasteries, either in Pembrokeshire or at his foremost teaching monastery Henllan, in Herefordshire. Dubricius's life as a monk was spent preaching and teaching both clergy and people. It was said of him that "*His light shone throughout Britain, like a candle upon a stand – the whole British nation preserved the true faith without any stain or false doctrine.*"

1). Cadoc. After Brychan's daughter Glwadys married Gwynllew, King of Glamorgan, Cadoc was their son, and thus grandson of Brychan, he was to found an important monastery, Llancarvan in Gwent and

2). David. Brychan's daughter Mechell was mother of Non, who married King Sant of West Wales, their son was Dewi, or David and thus a great grandson of Brychan, as was

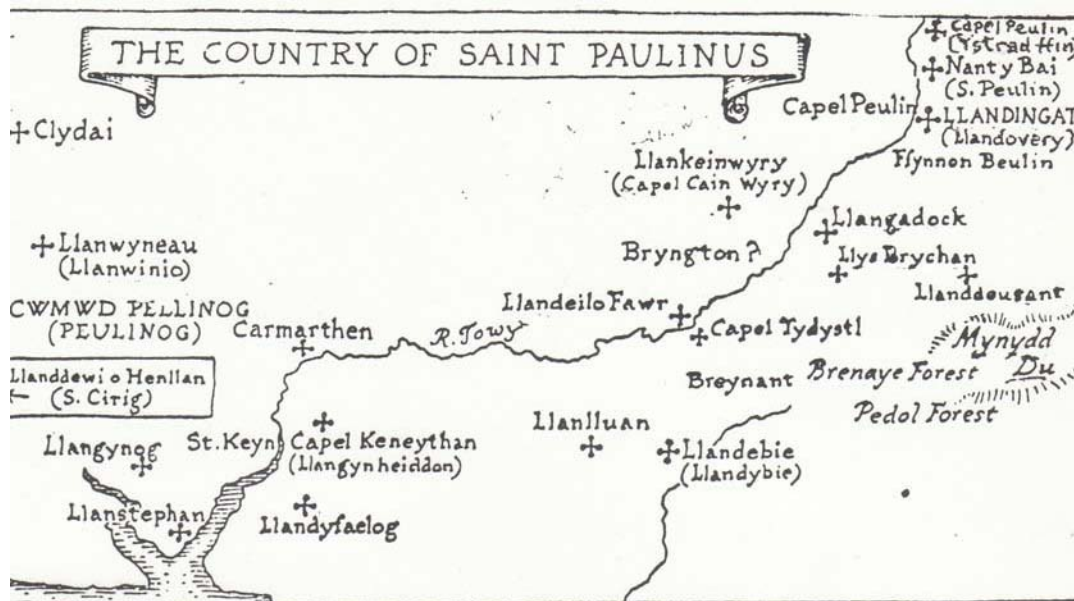
3) Teilo, both being also descended from the families of Ceredig Wledig and Brychan.

These were rousing and dangerous times. Earlier, a century or two before Dubricius, when people such as our famous Saint Alban were dying for their faith during that persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor Diocletian c 300 AD, two further famous saints of Wales, Julius and Aaron, were to die at Caerleon, in the southern part of Dubricius's inheritance. Whilst they were here however, the Romans had changed their beliefs bringing their own form of Christianity and civilisation, although they were in truth much more interested in the minerals in our country, such as iron ore around Archenfeld. These were conveniently to be found for transport abroad, near the mouth of the river Severn where Dubricius was born and where he set up his first monastery, Henllan, literally meaning the old church, which is today in the parish of Weston- under - Penyard, two miles south-east of Ross-on-Wye.

'In Henllan he had under his care a thousand clerks for a space of seven years.' Quite a task for any teacher! He later moved to Mochros, the place also of his birth, on an island which was well-wooded and abounding in fish and pigs, whereby that monastery was once again self-sufficient as a place of retreat. Here he was to remain with his innumerable disciples for many years, to continue his teaching. The island in fact, where this took place, was again named after his mother Erbdyl, and called 'Ynis Erbdil' (Inis or Ynis=island) originally, while Hentlan (or Hen = old, Llan = church), near the ancient city of Ariconium, which is today in the parish of Weston under Penyard, two miles east-south-east of Ross-on-Wye. Dubricius's, King Pebian of Archenfeld and Powys, ruled here also over Herefordshire, down the valleys of the



Severn, Wye and Usk, all three running into the Severn sea or Bristol Channel today, the Usk flowing down from Brecon all the way to Caerleon. To the north the Severn and the Severn Gorge are certainly not far from Lichfield, where the Gospels of Teilo mysteriously ended up, Dubricius's inheritance also being not far from those borders. Caerleon was undoubtedly under his jurisdiction and, when we are told that Dubricius anointed Arthur 'King' there, we can perhaps better understand the legends. <sup>xxxiv</sup>



The Celtic Monastic system, soldier/ monks and the making of Wales. St Illtud had been a soldier in the Roman army, and the retirement age was about forty. Their training was an ideal background in many ways for they had knowledge of travelling around the country and setting up camps, and self-sufficiency.

St Illtud invented an improved plough for growing the crops to feed the poor, who would come to monasteries for help. When he left the Roman army he went to Germanus for training in Brittany and with Brioc sailed for Britain. Here he attended further training in St Dubricius's monastery at Henllan, before setting out for the Gower coast and then founding his monastery at Llan Illtud Fawr on an older foundation of St Donat's close to an older ruined mansion.

We needed soldier/saints, just as much as priests. Arthur and his cousin Urien Rheged along with his brother Llew, were all men of action. <sup>xxxv</sup> The Saxon insurgence into Britain was gathering apace and we needed 'Soldier-Saints' also to help, and to stand up to this

invading flood. It was of course a lost cause, but the British put up a noble stand to the last. Inevitably, as the barbarian hordes surged south down to Rome and west through Paris, whereby we lost the influence of the Roman church, we find Britain's land routes were cut off and the seaways once again became the safest routes for travel. But, as we became cut off from Rome and the Roman Church by land, our contact with Brittany grew strong, people fleeing from the west of Britain and Wales, to live there in growing numbers from the 460's onwards. We see Samson and Paul Aurelian in the next generation, trained in Wales but feeling called to Brittany, to found <sup>xxxvi</sup> monasteries. Our contacts with Brittany in short grew strong, people fleeing from the west of Britain and Wales to live there in growing numbers from the 460's onwards. However this was, I repeat, also a two-way traffic.

We hear of Illtud, a former Roman soldier and Brioc praying together in Brittany; for the Welsh it was turmoil they were experiencing, and these two gifted men came to live in Wales and set to up monasteries of their own. Illtud is a radiant example, for he founded churches in the Gower peninsular and much later near the coast in Glamorgan, where he had a very large teaching monastery, LlanIlltud Fawr on an earlier foundation by St Donat; where not only St Paul Aurelian was trained, but also St Samson, whose father 'Amwn Ddu' ('Ddu' means 'black' in Welsh and pronounced 'Amon Thee') from Brittany a descendant of St <sup>xxxvii</sup> Patrick's sister there.

There were several major monasteries founded in this period such as St Cadoc's at Llancarvan, all teaching at least 1000 monks. Another is Llanbadarn Fawr, for instance, founded by St Padarn from Brittany, who was also of Welsh origin. There was a constant two-way movement of people, since many from Wales fled to Brittany to escape the Saxons in Britain also.

Interestingly it is clear that, until the routes were made impossible, formerly it was the custom for men to travel to Rome for extended periods, for study in the Scriptures and the Christian way of life. We have shining examples of the influence of these learned men in Wales - St Brynach for instance, and one man of special importance in our story, St Paulinus who trained as a Scribe for

many years in Rome, returning to his beloved homeland in Wales to train up in his turn, younger men at his birthplace near Caio and the goldmines, and to settle at his brother Urthwal's monastery for this work. He was to die there after many years teaching and working on his Gospel Book. Another, Germanus, whose sister married Androenus, King of Britain, trained men for the work, and was faithfully in charge of western Britain for the Roman church, while Lupus, his companion, settled later near Caio as a great support for St Paulinus, which I explain in the next chapter.

We might do well to remember what scholars have given us on Dubricius at this point. Canon C.H. Doble (1880-1945) was one who worked in this field, while D.Simon Evans edited and collated an edition of Doble's work<sup>xxxviii</sup> on five Welsh saints, to which I now

<sup>xxxix</sup> quickly refer. The Llandaff Charters, written by Norman bishops, are a minefield but, because they did not have much written evidence, nor did they speak Welsh, they are treated with caution, while there is of course much more to say, especially in the area of Cornwall and Devon, which I shall later merely touch upon. However, undoubtedly Dubricius himself, apart from being a great organiser and personality, was also a great scholar. To the large monastery at Henllan in Herefordshire, which he founded, the great teachers of the next generation would come, St Illtud being one; he arrived from Brittany as a former soldier, who left the army and studied for a while under St Germanus of Auxerre. Later, after studying at Henllan, he stayed to teach also, before settling in his own enormous monastery housing as many as 2000 monks, in Glamorgan at Llan Illtud Fawr. It is said that Dubricius (I quote), 'trained his young men in the knowledge of letters and of wisdom, divine and human, showing himself a true pattern of religious life and perfect charity.' Let us remember also the important backup of prayer, given for this movement from the holy men such as Brynach, Dubricius's father, who like Paulinus and others had studied many years in Rome, returning to Wales when Rome was overrun by pagan hordes.

Religious background and organisation: a short summary of the local religious background and organisation of the Celtic monastic system, soldiers/monks and the making of Wales.

This monastic system in the tribal life of the day would have at its head an abbot, who could be a layman, priest or bishop, inheriting his position by right of birth or suitability from amongst the monks of the tribe. His authority belonged purely to the monastery

and to the district where he lived. In spite of the large number of bishops in the Celtic Church, real power remained local with the abbot. The form of worship was not yet ordered, although we do have Celtic liturgies in Latin, dating back to this period. For about two centuries the Celtic church was cut off from Rome, until St Augustine re-established contact at the beginning of the 7th century. During this period the Celtic church was in contact instead with Jerusalem and with the Eastern church via the seaways and the strongest influence on the monastic church was the Coptic church of North Africa. Monastic discipline had been laid down by men such as St Jerome, St Augustine of Hippo and others. It was the practice of Christians to take on the indigenous faith and to build in Christian precepts, thus adapting for Christ both the beliefs of the people and their old place of worship.

People were under stress in many ways, as they turned to the missionary monks, many of whom were kings or nobles who had given away all material goods, including land and their right to a private or personal life, in order to lead their people to a different way of living. These were men who had had the advantages of education, good food and a pleasant life (because they were in a position to afford it), and yet they had chosen to abandon everything for their beliefs; such facts must surely have been most startling to that assortment of folk who came to listen; many were living in poverty themselves, beset by wild animals, with privations of cold and hunger and from time to time undergoing threats from those pagan Irish, now settled amongst them, since King Aircol Lawhir had subdued them and finally come to reign in Demetia. The people realised that something very powerful was at work in the lives of these men who had come to talk to them; if only out of curiosity, they came at first to stare; indeed to their astonishment very often, they were won over by the things that these men came to say.

Previously under the Romans, the Christian religion had come to be organised on diocesan lines and town-based. The town or city was the parish, while groups of cities with their territories (which the government already called provinces) became ecclesiastical provinces or dioceses, placed under a bishop from the chief city; indeed secular and religious power were often intertwined, as for example in St Patrick's time; Patrick's father not only had civic duties in local government as decurio or town councillor, but he was also a landowner and an ordained deacon. In the main the Saxons destroyed all this by ravaging the towns and burning them along with the Roman-built churches, leaving a trail of ruin and even destruction behind them; they followed up the river valleys which were well wooded as in their own countries, but were not prepared to cultivate the land as the British had done, whereby instead they left a trail of ruin and even destruction behind them. The Britons themselves were indeed criticised by Bede for not trying to convert the invaders to Christianity.

Desert places are for our place of encounter with God. In the later  
th and 6th

5 century, after the Roman occupying army had withdrawn from Britain to defend their city of Rome from the barbarian invaders, St Dubricius set about training his young disciples to take on the task of evangelising Wales, for he was in charge of this great Christian movement in the south and west of Britain. We saw how the valley of the river Wye in Herefordshire became a centre for his great monastery of Henllan. His followers later built little churches close by, near earlier Christian sites on the river Monnow, foundations which are still seen as little stone churches today. St Dubricius had inherited this land from his grandfather, King Pebian of Archenfeld, the son of King Constantine, Ambrosius's son who ruled the West Country, his mother being Erbdyl and father Brynach, son of Brychan.

Each year Dubricius would celebrate Lent on Caldey Island - off the coast of South Wales near Tenby (in those days probably still a peninsula). Here he would take his young pupils aside, gather them together, for a period of intensive prayer and meditation in beautiful surroundings. Part of this training would also consist of working in the fields – manual labour being integral to the life of the spirit - for anyone who has been on retreat to Caldey Island knows how, if not why, such proximity to nature, those borders between countries, especially that border between Wales and England, times and places, both the sunset and the dark, or dawn and day, along with seas and tides, give one a different perspective on life, and more openness to praise God, the Creator of all. 'Borders are full of vibes,' I heard someone say once!

Stepping over the border between normal life and the desert  
however can be quite frightening.<sup>xl</sup> Both psychiatrists and retreats can reveal the hidden person, which can be disturbing too. But it can also give that person an opportunity to change and grow. Creative life can also blossom when a problem is sincerely faced.

In Lent we build up to the betrayal and crucifixion of Our Lord, and this can be a testing time for those who enter in to what He was doing for us on the Cross also.

Saint Dubricius trained Teilo up to take over from him. Lent is a period when we really do try to understand what Jesus did for us,

and St Dubricius took his disciples away each year for the whole of Lent to a ‘desert place’- that is to say a retreat on Caldey Island off the shore near Tenby in south Wales, to do just that.

Even water has a vital role. We find water and rivers were often used as the means of spreading the Gospel in our country in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century. Today we are conscious of the sea surrounding our little island of Caldey, fostering moments for reflection, in isolation, withdrawn from the world. There we are free from distraction, able to come closer to God. Those young men in the 6<sup>th</sup> century – David and Teilo and the other pupils of St Dubricius - had closeness to nature, beautiful scenery, island birds and seals, and those gorgeous sunsets spreading right across the sea – they could concentrate on God amid His wonderful creation; it was only natural.

It is inspiring to discover how deeply and seriously our forebears took their Christian faith – how precious it was to them – even to being prepared to die for it. In Wales, we are fortunate that we still have whispers of those far off times, simply through circumstance, for our countryside has been left largely undisturbed until now, except in industrial areas. So I will attempt to paint a picture of those ancestors of ours, who lived in this place 15 centuries before us. Precise dating is surely less important to us, than attempting to understand what motivated our forebears to give their all for Christ.

For a moment let us consider Jesus’s desert experience after his public baptism, as a focus for our thoughts. He encountered the tempter face to face. He could have ruled the world – but that was not what He was about. Forty days and forty nights was a long time to be alone in a desert place – all kinds of imaginings could have taken place during that time. Sometime after Jesus’s death, when the early church began to formulate a kind of rhythm in the church’s year, Lent and Easter became the focal points in the church’s teaching about our Saviour. Lent became the period when new converts were taught the Christian faith, and prepared for baptism at Easter. Jerusalem at this time came to be filled with pilgrims and new converts and, one day, Teilo and David would go there to see it for themselves.

Jesus had been a mature man, when he went on retreat to the desert. Caldey Island was a very different place, and Dubricius's pupils were but youths, still only half-way through their arduous training, albeit learning fast. We know that later on David would stand in clear cold river water, to repeat the psalms, and to keep his own body under subjection. Teilo's training likewise helped him much later to lead many of the population from South Wales, to escape to safety in Brittany, when the yellow plague was decimating the inhabitants of Wales.

One can picture St Dubricius surrounded by his young followers preparing to celebrate Lent. Their fellowship was sweet, but of course their manual work continued in the fields – they had to feed themselves and learn to be self-sufficient - it was hard, and in all weathers. Practically speaking the monks had to grow their own food and to care for the cattle also, who in return gave the richest sweetest milk after grazing on that abundant grass of the island. Monks also had to learn how to build their new monasteries, which at first were like their own shelters, just small mud and wattle huts with reeds for a roof, but which later would need to become a much larger central place for worship.

Our Celtic saints followed on closely from the Desert Fathers and early Coptic Church, where the teachings of the church were fast becoming fully developed. The seaways not only brought goods, but also ideas, from Egypt and the Mediterranean; one may see this influence today in the early Gospel Books, one of which dates from this time, and was once on the altar of Teilo's great church at Llandeilo Fawr, but is now kept in Lichfield Cathedral.

Dubricius's life as a monk was spent preaching and teaching both the clergy and people; it was said of him that his example – “Shone throughout Britain, *Like a candle upon a stand - the whole British nation preserved the true faith without any stain or false doctrine.*” The island where this took place was named after his

mother Erbdyl, and called ‘Ynis Erbdil’. Hentland<sup>xli</sup> is near the ancient city of Ariconium, which today is in the parish of Weston-under-Penyard, two miles east-south-east of Ross-on-Wye. Dubricius's grandfather on his mother's side, King Pebian of Archenfeld and Powys, who was the son of Erb an Irish chief ruled.



Now we turn to Canon Doble, who quotes from the ‘Life of St Samson’, telling us how Dubricius ordained Samson as a deacon and goes on to say that a dove was seen to alight on Samson, seen only by his master Illtud and Dubricius himself. Samson is then sent each year to Caldey Island, where Dubricius owned a house, to spend Lent there; a stone inscribed to him in Latin and Ogham still exists, though slightly damaged. This monastery was founded by the great landowner King Pyr who emigrated from Waterford in Ireland, who also had another monastery on Machynis Island, off the coast of Llanelly. Dubricius put Samson in charge of the cellar at Caldý, which infuriated the monk he replaced. When Pyr died, Samson was made abbot in Pyr’s stead. Later in Samson’s ‘Life’ we are told that Dubricius ordained him bishop at the monastery Samson was trained in from the age of five, like Paul Aurelian, LlanIlltud Fawr, in Glamorgan, and that this monastery was originally founded by St Germanus. St Samson’s ‘Life’ tells us more, and also in the Book of Llandaf we are told that Dubricius and Teilo are two of the most famous saints of South Wales. Finally, we are told that in an earlier mission to Britain, it was St Germanus and St Lupus who appointed St Dubricius as archbishop over the whole of Southern Britain.

Dubricius trained Teilo to take over from him with overall charge of the Celtic Church in the mid-sixth century in Wales. It is worth recalling that Dubricius gained his Roman name, because he was living in a heavily Roman district of Britain. Hereford was near Caerleon, where the Romans had built an early fort and, since the same Roman soldiers who guarded St Paul were sent for duty to Caerleon shortly after, this was possibly a very early Christian area, not a lifetime after that of Our Lord. Dubricius is also known to the French as St Devereux, without much understanding about his history. It took seven years to research my book on St Teilo, as, with my husband Adrian, we travelled widely both in Britain and Brittany. More and more, we felt that this is a holy land - touch but a stone and one engendered a strong sensation that a saint had been there before us, giving his life to spread the Gospel of Christ. But what we know of St Dubricius was first written <sup>7</sup>

down only in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in the earliest (almost contemporary) ‘Life of St Samson’, by the monk Henoc, after Samson’s death.

Dubricius in fact consecrated Samson as Bishop before Samson went to Dol in Brittany. Henoc the priest was much concerned with his master Samson's 'Life', so that what we have received from his writing usually relates to stories in which Dubricius touches the life of Samson and even better, it is almost contemporary and therefore the more to be trusted.

Let us therefore look at the man who became his teacher, indeed trained Teilo to take over from him. He was brought up in Herefordshire, near a tributary of the Wye, the river Monnow. He is still remembered there today. Like his grandfather Brychan he set out to concentrate on the next generation for Christ. He did not marry, but was to found the great Celtic monastic movement with a major training monastery, Henllan, near Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. His influence on the next generation, and indeed on the future of the Welsh church was to be profound; his students included, his nephews Teilo, David and Cadoc, and many, many others, for Dubricius was in charge of the pioneering monastic work - throughout south Wales, Devon and Cornwall.

Dubricius had under his care a thousand clerks for a space of more than seven years' at Mochros, the place also of his birth, on an island which was well wooded and abounding in fish and pigs, whereby that monastery was once again self-sufficient as a place of retreat. Here he was to remain with his innumerable disciples for many years, to continue his teaching.

The Romans had set up the early British church, the Emperor Constantine declaring the Empire as Christian from York. We know that in 314 three Bishops were sent to Arles to represent the British church, namely Eborius Bishop of York, Restitutus, bishop of London and Adelphus bishop of Caerleon (albeit with some dispute as to his area). The British bishops were so poor that they could not support themselves, even having to accept hospitality from the heretic Emperor in 360 at Ariminum (according to Sulpicius Severus). However with the invasion of Rome that was all to come to a standstill. We call it the dark ages with good reason, since we have still much to find out about that period.

So we find St Dubricius closely involved with the action through his grandfather Brychan. His aunt Tydfil was another martyred for

her faith, and is commemorated at the place known as Merthyr Tydfil. These were rousing and dangerous times. Earlier, just a century before, when people such as our famous St Alban were dying for their faith during that persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor Diocletian until c. 300 AD, two further famous saints of Wales, Julius and Aaron, were to die at Caerleon, in the southern part of Dubricius's inheritance.

Whilst they were here, the Romans had brought their form of Christianity and civilisation. Their interest however was in the minerals in our country, such as iron ore around Archenfeld, which was conveniently situated near the mouth of the river Severn, near Dubricius's birthplace, and where he set up his first monastery, the old church 'Hen Llan'. Other important minerals included gold, the Dolaucothi gold mines being only ten miles north of Llandeilo, undoubtedly meaning that this area required special defences.

However, since the Romans had returned to defend their city of Rome by 410 AD, Britain was left defenceless. The convolutions that we know about had both religious and political motives, but they are far too complex to analyse here! Brittany was gaining in importance in support of Britain, while the western seaways had certainly to be protected, for Irish raids were increasing. It was up to those who remained in Wales, Brychan thus becoming the important man in this story, holding the land for Christ.

I have tried to give a quick outline of the families with their background which grew up in Britain and their shores around from early times, that is to say leaving out almost all the Christian history from AD 1, to AD 500 which would take another book.

They were highly educated, disciplined, and would gather around St Dubricius each day, to hear what he had to teach. They had the Scriptures to study and discuss, and thereafter deeply to meditate and pray about what they had heard. Some of these youths we already know by name – David (Dewi in Welsh) a name itself derived from *Dwr* meaning water, was an aesthetic, who trained himself to drink only water and to eat bread, but no meat and only occasionally a little fish – he was to become the patron saint of Wales. Then there was Teilo, his cousin and great friend; they

worked together, building many little church foundations all over south Wales – David concentrated particularly (but not exclusively) in the south west; Teilo in the same area but with his main monastery at Llandeilo, further east and on today's A40, a little further inland and around the Gower Coast. A third young man was Samson, another great friend and contemporary, also an aesthetic, who was to become Abbot at Caldey for a short while, until he fell out with the monks there, when he accused them of being too lax! Such are but brief glimpses of some of the young men under Dubricius's charge – deeply committed to God's work from early youth.

The monks' needs were simple – not like ours today – how much could we do without, I wonder? for many refugees are forced to leave home with practically nothing – it must be hard. But our Celtic saints had chosen this way deliberately, whereby they had no distractions, which meant that their time was free from dawn to dusk, close to nature, self-sufficient, care free - trusting only God. We know for instance that in Ireland, when God called one of His young disciples to Scotland, the saint climbed into a boat with neither sail nor oars, allowing his boat to be taken whersoever wind or rain would, believing that God would direct his boat to land at the spot of His choosing.

Can we, who are forever fussed about our next concern, ever become as trusting as that? In effect Dubricius's approach was to create a sense in his disciples, that they themselves could be an island for God, an Ynis', in the midst of the turmoil of life around them. This is the essence of a Christian's peace in God – Peace and Joy which Jesus came to bring us at Christmas. This is paradoxically what Palm Sunday is also all about, waving our palms of peace and joy, as our Saviour comes on the journey of His death – for us!

Interestingly the same island experience is found near my home in Wales as late as the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. A Premonstratensian monastery, Talley Abbey, hidden in that beautiful countryside under the shelter of those mountains, was disbanded in Henry VIII's time, when the monks had to leave, to live in various farms around the abbey which to my surprise still have that name 'Ynis' + 'this or that farm' even today. To them it

meant so purposefully ‘an island for God set in a pagan land’.

We can see this still exemplified today by that Celtic prayer in those little circular churchyards around several ancient churches, like an ‘Ynis’ or island, representing a space given over to God in the midst of an unbelieving world; in fact Caldey was on a peninsular in Dubricius’s time, but later became an island. I have already mentioned that those farms around Crug-y-bar and Caio today still have ‘Ynis’ as their prefix in the same way, for the monks were forcibly retired at the dissolution of the monasteries, to farm the lands around Talley - perhaps even earlier from those days of Paulinus and his brother Urthwal. The poet, Oliver Davies talks about islands as border territory, frontiers between two worlds - ‘the edge of the known world - guardians of unknown forces - inhabiting the margins of death and life’. He likens the islands of Lindisfarne or Iona to places of wholeness. He asks ‘How can we use the insight of the Celtic saints in a way that is meaningful for us today - in order to enrich our own religious life today?’ He reminds us however, ‘Trying to find out something about ourselves in this way is a risky business!’

One is reminded again of the Celtic prayer -

‘Circle me O God, keep protection near and danger afar; keep hope within, keep doubt without. Circle me Lord, keep peace within, keep evil out.’

The ‘llan’ or church enclosure was usually round and we see it in our Welsh churchyards today. The habit may have begun with the ancient Celtic and Druidic circles, later continued by the Celtic Christian church. Sometimes they include an ancient fortified hill with several ditches, a moat and steep banks to keep aggressors out. The chief might have had a small house within the circle, while there is the case of a church in Pembrokeshire, with a standing stone inscribed in Ogham and Latin, where the beloved daughter of a chief was buried within just such a fortification, and where later a church was to grow, dating from about 450 AD.

As a design of course, the circle is in several faiths a symbol of eternity and eternal life, while an island fits this concept very well; it is a good place to get away to, and to spend some time with God. (Indeed there is something quite special about an island,

while Britain for many of its citizens will never be the same when attached to the mainland of Europe!) A circle is both inclusive Celtic Christianity and natural, but also unity with the universe; they become close to nature, the sea and water being part of that universe, there was a wholeness of outlook and health, so that interpretation of the natural and the supernatural, sacredness of place and communion between the living and the dead seemed but a normal part of, but special to our faith, while Celtic crosses include that circle around as a symbol of wholeness. *Wholeness* and health are important concepts in the Celtic faith, for us all in fact; we can do well also to remember the origin of our familiar greeting 'Hallo' from 'Whole (or hale) be thou'.

St Dubricius spent every Lent at Caldey, while Teilo from the age of about five years spent it with him. But Dubricius was also a great teacher and Lent leads up to both Good Friday and Easter, the greatest time in the church's year, with the teaching of Christ's resurrection as our central Christian teaching; Dubricius's words would surely be most precious today. There is an inscribed stone on Caldey to Dubricius's faithful unnamed servant who died there. But there are many others. St Samson was Abbot at Caldey for a short while, and of course old King Pyr retired to the island monastery. St Illtud is supposed to have first founded a monastery on King Pyr's island, but young men flocked to Caldey in such great numbers that he was obliged to remove to Llanilltud Fawr in Glamorgan to accommodate them.

After their work in the fields, or wheresoever, the monks would fast and pray, alone, in silence and with their Saviour. This intimacy of everyday life with their faith is characteristic of the Celtic saints. Many of the prayers translated for us today show how knowledge and love of God flooded their lives in every menial task; Christ had told his disciples on the night before his death that they must 'wash one another's feet', if they would be his disciples. Their reverence for life also came across, not only in their daily tasks, but in their prayers too, coming to a glorious crescendo at the end of Lent during the Easter celebration with that power of resurrection, whereby Christ's life became so strong that it burst out of the tomb - death flooded with Life Everlasting has surely that very special emphasis that Celtic spirituality can

teach us again today.

There are however several other aspects of Celtic thought which we could well develop: Simplicity and the small Celtic church (c.f. Norman Cathedrals!).

All over Wales one may find small churches dotted around the countryside even in the remotest places, witnessing to the ministry of faithful saints of the past. The Celtic saints trod the whole of Wales on foot, carrying their Gospel book strapped to their back. Often they carried a bell to summon the local population to listen to the Gospel message. If people were interested, the saint would decide to stay for a while to teach and to instruct people in the Christian faith. They stayed in a simple shelter, easily built, or accepting local hospitality. If the chief of the locality was converted, it meant the whole tribe would soon follow his example, so that a small wattle church could be built for worship. The saints had been thoroughly instructed in hard manual labour in the fields and knew about cultivation of crops, so that they could also pass on fresh ideas about the best and latest methods to isolated populations. Their secret was their simplicity, getting alongside the local population, making themselves available in times of distress and of course chiefly talking about God.

All this was so different to the later Norman church with its grand architecture, formal worship, beautiful singing and hierarchy of church dignitaries, unapproachable for the common people, offering a completely different style of worship and understanding of God. Not wrong necessarily, but different. Less Biblical however, I would suggest, for Christ's message to his followers was 'I am among you as one who serves'.

In the Celtic vision there was no fissure between the whole process of life. This is something we have lost. Modern-day living is in comparison perhaps fragmentary, lonely, pressurised and compartmentalised, leading to stress, tension, irritability and illness. There are those who think of such considerations as unhistorical, imaginary, conjured up, but I believe that we have much to learn from our Celtic saints.



## **Aspects of Faith.**

**Creation theology.** Creation theology has changed considerably in our day; as scientific knowledge increases; modern man has become far more aware of atomic structures and similar marvels than his Celtic forebears. Does this however need to alter our belief about our Creator, or His intimate involvement?

There is a discernible rhythm to life, the seasons, birth, growth, maturity, old age and death. They are all in large measure predictable. It is the same in all nature; it has always been so and always will be. Our bodies are like time clocks and will last longer, if we obey the rules of nature. The whole universe of galaxies in space are subject to these rules, as are the atoms and the individual DNA in each one of us. But our lives depend on faith also, as well as that continuing presence, especially of the heat and light of the sun.

**Light and darkness.** The Celtic saints were as much aware as we are today that the physical world, which most of us can see and with which we are familiar, is only part of the story. The real existence is that existence beyond the touch of time, viz.: the spiritual dimension. We believe it to be that existence for which this physical life is but a preparation. We are all sinners, as the church rightly says, but it is those of us who realise our need for God because of our short-comings and who try to do something about it, who have real hope; we are not saints, but we do stand in need of forgiveness ourselves. Nor are we in a position to judge anyone else. Those spiritual aspects of light and darkness were very real to the Celtic world. Light meant life, darkness meant death. Today we still continue those Festivals of Light in all the faiths and the secular world; we do well to remember this when the Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah, the Hindus and Sikhs Divali, and the Christians and Muslims pray together to God as the light of the world; it still carries an ancient meaning to us, while one of the age old prayers of the church is to ask God to lighten our darkness of both mind and spirit.

**Pelagius/Arius.** This was that controversy already referred to, which raged in the time of the Celtic saints. Pelagius was from Britain but travelled to Rome, where he carried on a debate with St Augustine on the Grace of God versus man's own effort as the important factor in man's salvation.

**Sacred Water,** springs and wells; Wales abounds in these, so that as a result our countryside is green and lush. The Celtic saints usually built their church close to a stream, the more easily to baptise the newly converted Christian. But also the presence of water means life. From earliest times all creatures need water even before food for their sustenance, but it has healing properties too, while minerals and healing agents are to be found in wells and springs which became sacred to the Druids and were blessed by the saints. Water means purity, cleanliness and health, including washing away of sins.

**The Trinity** was one of the central beliefs of the Celts, so that songs and prayers which have come down to us, from the Hebrides and Ireland, especially constantly invoke the Trinity. In Christianity we believe in God the Father, the Creator of all things, and God the Son through whom and for whom it was created, and who came as man to be born like us, so that through his death and resurrection he opened the kingdom of heaven, so that all who believe this could be with him in heaven for eternity. But it is this need for forgiveness of our mistakes which requires the movement of the Holy Spirit within us - the third person of the Christian Trinity, who brings us Grace indeed; this movement is Grace itself. What then is this Holy Spirit and his work?

**The work of the Holy Spirit includes** healing and wholeness, many tongues, exorcism and charismatics. The Holy Spirit is the power of God at work in us and the world, usually understood as a personal God, which inspired the writers of the Holy Bible; who was seen as a Dove descending on Jesus at his baptism, when God the Father spoke saying: 'This is my beloved Son', a truly Trinitarian experience. The Holy Spirit was given to the Church at Pentecost, and is handed down in the 'Laying on of hands', being passed to those in need as a healing process, and also in exorcism which was more often practised by the early church than it is today.

Both Paul Aurelian and also Samson, amongst many other Celtic monks, strongly felt God's leading in their lives, for they strove to commit the passage of their lives to Him. We know them as **Perigrinate**, that is to say they had abandoned their will to God and His work in the world. We can illustrate this by their wish to allow their journey by sea to be directed as a boat without sails or oar, in order that God would guide their journey to the place of His choosing.

**The feminine aspect of God (another subject requiring a book in itself!)** along with the centrality of the mother in the family, and women's place generally: this subject is perhaps the most undervalued and misunderstood aspect of society in general today, but I do not intend to pursue it further here in this short booklet.

**Wonder.** As we become more and more separated from country life, fixed in our modern concrete, urban existence, we lose that sense of wonder which is so natural to those lucky enough to be able to cling to their country roots - the wonder of a sunset over the sea, which is an almost daily occurrence on the western coasts of Britain; the sound of migrating birds, be it the daily sunset swirl of geese turning as a flock, to return to their nightly rest on the coast; or the annual return of the swallows; who can bear to miss such experiences who have ever known or loved them! But wonder is much more difficult to cultivate in our cities.

These are but indicators to us of that unseen world about us, the world of the spirit. Today it is as if we have lost that sixth sense, although some people appear to retain it; St Illtud, for instance, who was a highly cultivated and brilliant individual, was credited with having it; he certainly had a special wisdom and insight into things, even into events which would happen in the future. This comes perhaps from having great simplicity of lifestyle, although not necessarily of character, for Illtud was a highly gifted charismatic leader. There is still much that we do not understand, such as the interpretation of the natural and the supernatural, of sacredness of place, and of communion between the living and the dead. This last was strictly forbidden in the Bible, but unsought for things do sometimes happen. Angels can be our guides (see footnote) - guides throughout life to the place of our resurrection - a thought perhaps to be carefully handled, for certain Christian

churches do not believe in ‘angels’, whatever they may be, although they are constantly referred to both in the Bible and the Quran. In our day to day lives it is hard to recognise such things.

The Celtic saints believed that everyone should have a mentor, a spiritual director, or ‘soul friend’. ‘When you look for a soul friend, choose the person who will burn you most’, quotes Esther de Waal, for this is how you grow into God and lose your dross. Finally it is claimed that the Celtic saints showed to posterity, ‘An ideal of innocence and purity, which has never been surpassed’, I quote there from Nora Chadwick.

Footnote:-‘Angels as Guides - Guides to the Place of Their Resurrection.’ (Charles Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* 2 vols Oxford 1910 1:clxxx).

### **385 Paganism**

Chambers’ Dictionary:

1) Pagan - noun or adjective - from Latin ‘Paganus’ = a peasant, from ‘pagus’ = a village or country district; just about equivalent to the true meaning of ‘a heathen’, which comes from the Anglo-Saxon word ‘haeth’, i.e. a person from the heath.

2) A person who worships false gods, which can include heathens, idolaters and even those who are not Christians, Jews or Muslims.

The lives of the saints record that they encountered both types, i.e. those who were countrymen close to the soil and natural environment, essentially those to whom they were preaching! and unbelievers or those who actually worshipped false gods.

**Paganism versus Christianity.** For two hundred years, c400-600, the seaways around Europe became the sole Christian contact and lifeline between Britain and the civilised world. It was thus that the Desert fathers and Coptic Church, together with the Church at Jerusalem and the Eastern Orthodox churches, became the only real Christian influence on western Britain. Thus Wales is often said by the Roman Episcopal church to have deteriorated at this time, incorporating many pagan customs and habits, such as veneration of wells and skulls. However water was an important spiritual symbol and, for centuries in many countries, skulls had been a trophy of war. But in the Norman period when perhaps St

Teilo's body was dug up from its probable burial place in Llandeilo Fawr, the skull was probably removed from the body; it recently turned up in Australia, but is now kept in Llandaff, a Mrs Melchior having had charge of it in Pembrokeshire at one time; certainly we know that the Roman church practised early the veneration of relics.

Similar pagan customs were contemporaneous with such Roman customs as human sacrifice, polytheism and many other cults. The worship of Mithras was brought to Britain by Roman officers, and Vopiscus says the Emperor Aurelianus consulted Druidesses in Gaul about his future, while the throwing of Christians into the arenas of the Colosseum in Rome reveals that pagan customs were just as rife in Rome as in Britain or anywhere else at the time; to claim therefore that the Druids for example were the only pagans could be said to be the kettle calling the pot black! There was no doubt a similar proportion of non-pagans then as today, in the mix of society, and just as many God-fearers too, who were prepared to accept the message of Christ. In short this is the way of the world. It can however also be said that this was a period when Wales went through a time of seminal revival from a spiritual point of view.

### **The wider meaning of paganism and the meaning of polytheism, neo-paganism, witchcraft and magic in context.**

The pagan Celts and Celtic Christianity had a pantheistic outlook to God's creation, that is, God was in his creation everywhere. Today we consider this close to polytheism and somewhat pejoratively we criticise the Hindus for the same error. We also talk critically about the Pantheon of Egypt, Greece and Rome (the whole galaxy of minor gods in those faiths), although the word pantheist was only used first by Spinoza in the 16th century. It is a bit sophisticated and hypercritical, it seems to me, to conjure up modern words such as 'Pantheistic', when we are really talking about the faith of the common people in trying to understand that complex truth of God in all His creation. Today we further develop a new sophisticated word, called 'Pantheism', signifying God working through his creation, a 19th century word. In fact Brahma, Jehovah, the Lord God, or Allah all signify the one and only God, but man needs to see the many aspects of God in His

environment - the confusion is understandable. We do need to respect the other faiths in their attempt to solve this mystery and we can learn so much from each other.

**God's relationship to man** (man's inability to understand, leading to schisms, doubt, D.I.Y.)

**The Network of New Age faith and New Religious Movements, the Scientific Age, Aquarius etc., and learning to distinguish between the positive faiths and customs on the one hand, and the negative, the dangerous, even suicidal for mankind on the other.** (I am afraid I am ignorant of this).

As far as Celtic Christianity is concerned, a whole variety of themes could now be explored and discussed to fill in so many aspects, such as:

Druids - as administrators, seers, and poets, with law, history, and music schools.

Water (already touched on), Light, Fire, Seasons.

'The Greens'; use of herbs as medicines etc.

Art and social custom.

The honoured place of the poet.

- 'Ynis' or island as a symbol to the Celtic saints representing a space given over to God in the midst of an unbelieving world (in fact Caldey was on a peninsular in Dubricius's time, but later became an island). I have already mentioned that those farms around Crug-y-bar and Caio today still have 'Ynis' as their prefix in the same way, for the monks were forcibly retired at the dissolution of the monasteries, to farm the lands around Talley –

Oliver Davies talks about islands as border territory, frontiers between two worlds - 'the edge of the known world - guardians of unknown forces - inhabiting the margins of death and life. He likens the islands of Lindisfarne or Iona to places of wholeness. He asks 'How can we use the insight of the Celtic saints in a way that is meaningful for us today - in order to enrich our own religious life today?' He continues however, 'Trying to find out something about ourselves in this way is a risky business!'

In Brittany Illtud (a Breton) and Brioc (who was Welsh), prayed together in Brittany for Wales, as many people fled across the sea to Brittany, to seek refuge from the Saxon invasion in the east from the 440s onward, which was encroaching steadily westwards. Illtud had been a soldier in the Roman army and as such he had been trained to build encampments at certain points en route; it was helpful also to the pioneer movement of the local churches. Illtud landed in Wales on the southern shore near Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen Bay. He was for a time on the Gower coast, and inland there he built a church. But his disciples grew and after his period of training by Dubricius at Henllan in Herefordshire, Illtud became a teacher there. Afterwards he was to make his main teaching monastery in Glamorganshire, at LlanIlltud Fawr, an important training monastery for the next generation of missionary monks. Illtud and David and Teilo also had foundations on the Gower amongst other monks. Bishopston for instance is a foundation of Saint Teilo (the Bishop's town).

It is hard to skip through the lives of these formidable teachers and men of God, but this book is an effort to show the rigorous Christianity of these formidable people, and the issues which they had to deal with, to convert those who were willing, to the life of God.

We do not know where Saint Illtud is buried but there is a site on the Brecon beacons above Llansamlet, which could be his resting place. Since it was the fashion in this period to be buried at Bardsey Island (some 20,000 saints are said to be buried there ie: a very great number).

Dubricius however followed many Welsh saints to the island of Bardsey to join his companions, many of whom retired there to die. We understand that the Normans had him transferred to Llandaff Cathedral later however. The Llandaff Charters are a minefield, written much later by Norman bishops; Wendy Davies has worked on this source, and we might do well to remember what other scholars have given us on Dubricius at this point. Canon C.H. Doble (1880- 1945), was one who worked in this field, while D.Simon Evans edited and collated an edition of Doble's work on five Welsh saints to which I now quickly refer, and of course there is much more, especially in the area of

Cornwall and Devon, which I shall merely touch upon.

Undoubtedly Dubricius himself, apart from being a great organiser and personality, was a great scholar. To the large monastery at Henllan in Herefordshire, which he founded, the great teachers of the next generation would come, St Illtud being one with his friend St Brioc, who had been praying for Wales from their homeland in Brittany; he arrived from Brittany as a former soldier who left the army and studied for a while under St Germanus of Auxerre. Later after studying at Henllan under St Dubricius, Illtud then became in charge of LlanIlltud Fawr.

Of Dubricius's life as a monk spent preaching and teaching both the clergy and people, I quote again – ‘He shone throughout Britain, *“Like a candle upon a stand - the whole British nation preserved the true faith without any stain or false doctrine.”*

Canon Doble quotes from the ‘Life of St Samson’, telling us how Dubricius ordained Samson as a deacon and goes on to say that a dove was seen to alight on Samson, seen only by his master Illtud and Dubricius himself. Samson is then sent to Caldey Island, where Dubricius owned a house, thereafter to spend Lent each year there; a stone inscribed to him both in Latin and Ogham still exists, though slightly damaged. This monastery was in fact founded by the great landowner King Pyr, who also had a monastery on Machynis Island, off the coast of Llanelly. Dubricius put Samson in charge of the cellar, which infuriated the monk he replaced!

Pyr then died, and Samson became abbot in his stead. Later in Samson's ‘Life’ we are told that Dubricius ordained him bishop at Llanilltud Fawr in Glamorgan, which caused Dubricius's nephews to become very jealous. St Samson's ‘Life’ tells us so much more, and also in the Book of Llandaff we learn that Dubricius and Teilo are two of the most famous saints of South Wales. In view of the understanding we now have of the importance of Llandeilo Fawr in the Christian story, we would do well to re-evaluate the role that St Teilo had at Llandeilo Fawr. It was clearly a place of deep spirituality fired up by the intense concentration around Old Paulinus and his work at Caio. Caio church itself was a Mother Church founded by St David, and the



group which worshipped there which included David's mother, St Non. Llandewi Brevi where St David was proclaimed Archbishop of Wales is not far away. This is a general overview of the rapid work started by Dubricius. The Celtic Church in Wales was shortly to be overcome by the Saxon insurgency. ('Caio' English, and 'Caeo' Welsh, are the same).

At this period the whole island of Britain was in turmoil; Wales alone kept the Faith, and this small group of believers showed that it is possible to believe in the sufficiency of the One True God.'

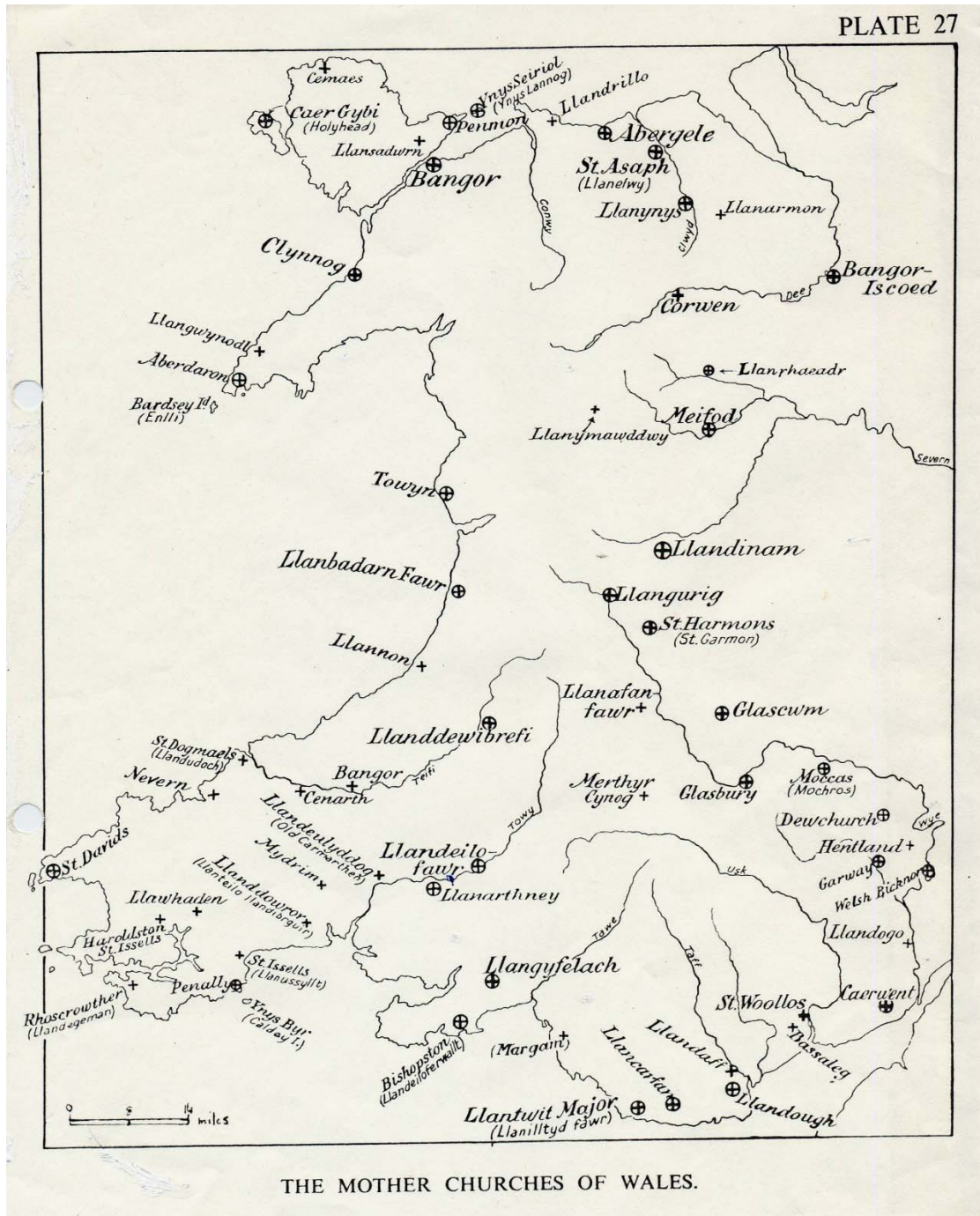
During this period the Saxons saw their chance to move inland as far as old Sarum, an ancient Celtic Christian settlement which today is close to Salisbury.

The Llandaff Charters are a minefield, written much later by Norman Bishops. Wendy Davies has worked on this source, and we might do well to remember what other scholars have given us on Dubricius at this point. Canon C.H.Doble (1880-1945), was one who worked in this field, while D.Simon Evans edited and collated an edition of Doble's work on five Welsh saints to which I now quickly refer, and of course there is much more, especially in the area of Cornwall and Devon, which I shall merely touch upon.

To turn to one great saint, Dubricius now: Undoubtedly Dubricius himself, apart from being a great organiser and personality, was a great scholar. To the large monastery at Henllan in Herefordshire, which he founded, the great teachers of the next generation would come, St Illtud being one with his friend Brioc who had been praying for Wales from their homeland in Brittany; he arrived from Brittany as a former soldier who left the army and studied for a while under St Germanus of Auxerre.

To return now to St Dubricius, his life as a monk was spent preaching and teaching both clergy and people, I quote again – "*He shone throughout Britain like a candle upon a stand – the whole British nation preserved the faith without any stain or false doctrine.*" Canon Doble quotes from the 'Life of St Samson', telling us how Dubricius ordained Samson as a deacon and goes on to say that a dove was seen to alight on Samson, seen only by his master Illtud and Dubricius himself. Samson is then sent to

Caldy Island, where Dubricius owned a house, thereafter to spend Lent each year there; a stone inscribed to him both in Latin and Ogham still exists, though slightly damaged. King Pyr, who also had a monastery on Machynis Island, off the coast of Llanelli. More about Dubricius comes from the 'Life of St Samson', written by a monk in St Samson's monastery in Brittany in the next generation after Samson's death.



Mother churches founded many smaller local churches around them.

## Chapter Eight

### St Teilo

#### The founding of Llandeilo Fawr and the rapid spread of monastic foundations all over Wales.

At this period the whole island of Britain was in turmoil; Wales alone kept the Faith, and this small group of believers showed that it was possible to believe in the sufficiency of the unchanging God. With Jesus the chief cornerstone on which all else depends, they learned to grow in holiness to perfect union with God.

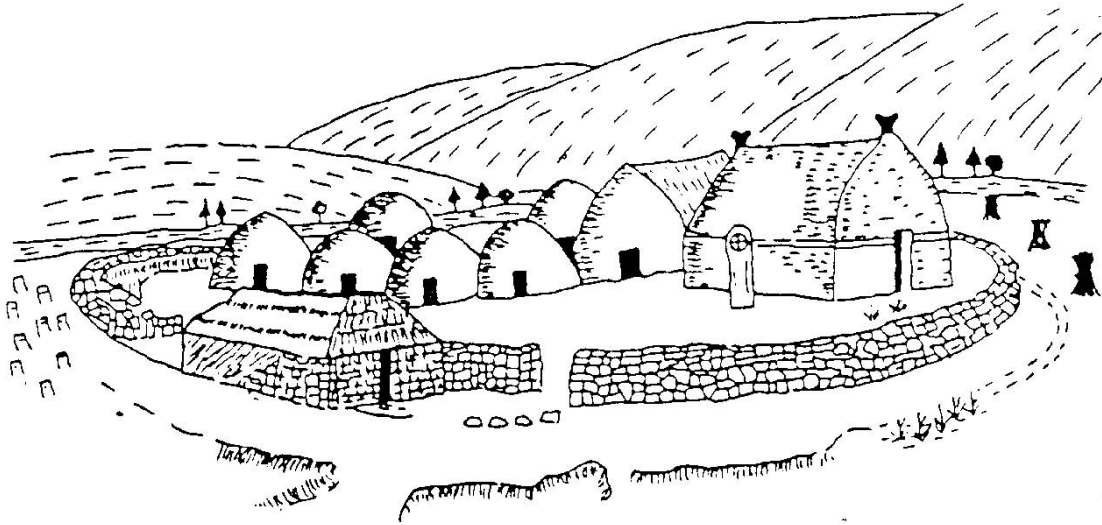
But all this was to be changed by circumstances so soon to overtake them, for in 547 AD the Yellow Plague was to sweep through Wales and the population was soon to break up to flee to Brittany. The Saxon invaders, watching this mass evacuation, were not slow to take advantage, and thus began their all out attack on the west.<sup>xlii</sup>

But we are moving too fast in this narrative.

It is difficult to date this period because of the paucity of written evidence, however I cannot move on without consolidating one or two pieces of evidence which in my lifetime could disappear in Llandeilo Fawr; for instance the countryside is being filled with modern houses, which are swallowing up the rural countryside, and what was a village almost all my life with inns having deep cellars, showing that Llandeilo had traditionally been a place of hospitality on a large scale, possibly indicating that the tradition went back many hundreds of years. Now we see these old places modernised with prices which are charged equivalent to those in the towns, whereby in my lifetime Llandeilo has lost its atmosphere of a monastic city. Although if you look for it, or remember it, you'll find it is still there. So let us take ourselves back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century again

All too soon it was time to move on. Their training was underway, and now was the time for action. We move on in this story to the founding of churches and places of worship; these foundations in Wales go back a very long way, and in the centre of our Beloved Valley Saint Teilo was to build his main monastery. This did not happen overnight, but Teilo and David worked together closely in

south-west Wales, and so we find many smaller churches dedicated to them, and of course to many other men who were part of this tremendous expansion of the Christian faith all over Wales



A typical Celtic Monastery.

during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. Others have written about their local saint and, since I am concerned with Llandeilo and the 'Beloved Valley' simply because my family originate from there, this is for me the obvious interest.

Sometimes a monastic site would be developed on a circular Druidic religious site, re-consecrated to Christ. Water was an essential element, since the Celtic monks always baptised the newly converted in running water. Thus at Llandeilo we find numerous springs and, close by the church, is the baptistry with water also running from a spring under the wall.

### **The importance of Llandeilo Fawr from its early days.**

Since Teilo lived in the sixth century, Llandeilo Fawr was certainly founded within this period. In the early days it would consist of a compound surrounded by a bank or fence, within which the monks' single or double cells would be situated around a larger building for worship. It was here that Teilo died, but a legend grew up as to where he was buried, three places laying claim to his relics, namely, Llandaff, Penally, near Tenby where he was born and where his family lived, and Llandeilo Fawr. There is a further legend about his skull.

The drawing below was given to me by Prof E.G.Bowen.

The Celtic church was built upon the 'Clas' system, which is to say the family or tribe in the area would claim the inheritance of

the monastery, the Abbot being the head, possibly but not necessarily a married man, his most suitable son, or perhaps nephew, inheriting his position at his death; it is assumed that Oudoceous, his sister's son followed, but this may not have been the case.

Queen Elen had ensured in her time that Wales had a network of roads, so that, apart from the Roman roads connecting their holding forts in Wales, there were also the native roads, which meant that communications could be maintained, whereby they still exist today known as Sarn Elen.

St David or Dewi Sant is well known and much has been written about our Patron Saint, who was working at the same time as Saint Teilo.<sup>xliii</sup> Churches in Ireland used wood, whereas in Wales these early foundations were simply wattle and daub and within a compound, usually circular, with small huts and a larger one for worship. Llandeilo, or Teilo's church, was therefore built on a hill in the middle of 'The Beloved Valley', high above the river Towy, with a commanding view around the countryside.

**Life in a monastery.** This is not the place to talk in detail about life in a monastery. Suffice to say that Llandeilo Fawr became a major monastery and as such would have been a place of learning, but also a base for missionary work. Apart from the monastic routine of prayer and worship, in their little cells monks would laboriously copy out the Gospels, later to strap them on their backs to depart on their missionary journeys. The strategic position meant that it was placed at the conjunction of several routes, along which monks would go out singly or in pairs. Today's A40, on the route of a Roman road, follows the Tywi River from its mouth at Carmarthen and up past Llandeilo through to Llandovery. The road continues to Brecon and Hereford. A second Roman road from near Llandovery leads to Caio (another major monastery), through Pumpsaint and the gold mines and then on to Ceredigion.

Crossing the Tywi from Llandeilo however, we move into foreign territory, Heol Rheged (or Rheged's Road but no longer on the ordnance survey map since 1851) leading from the churchyard of Llandeilo to Carreg Cennen; this was all included in the Welsh land of Urien Rheged, (brother-in-law to Arthur), whose land

stretched to Teilo's church at Pontardulais known as Llandeilo Fach (or the lesser). Recently this church has been transported to St Fagan's museum near Cardiff.





The western front. (photo © Allan Matthews)



Southern front overlooking the crag of the river Cennen.



Eastern Front



The western front with the Chapel Tower at its middle

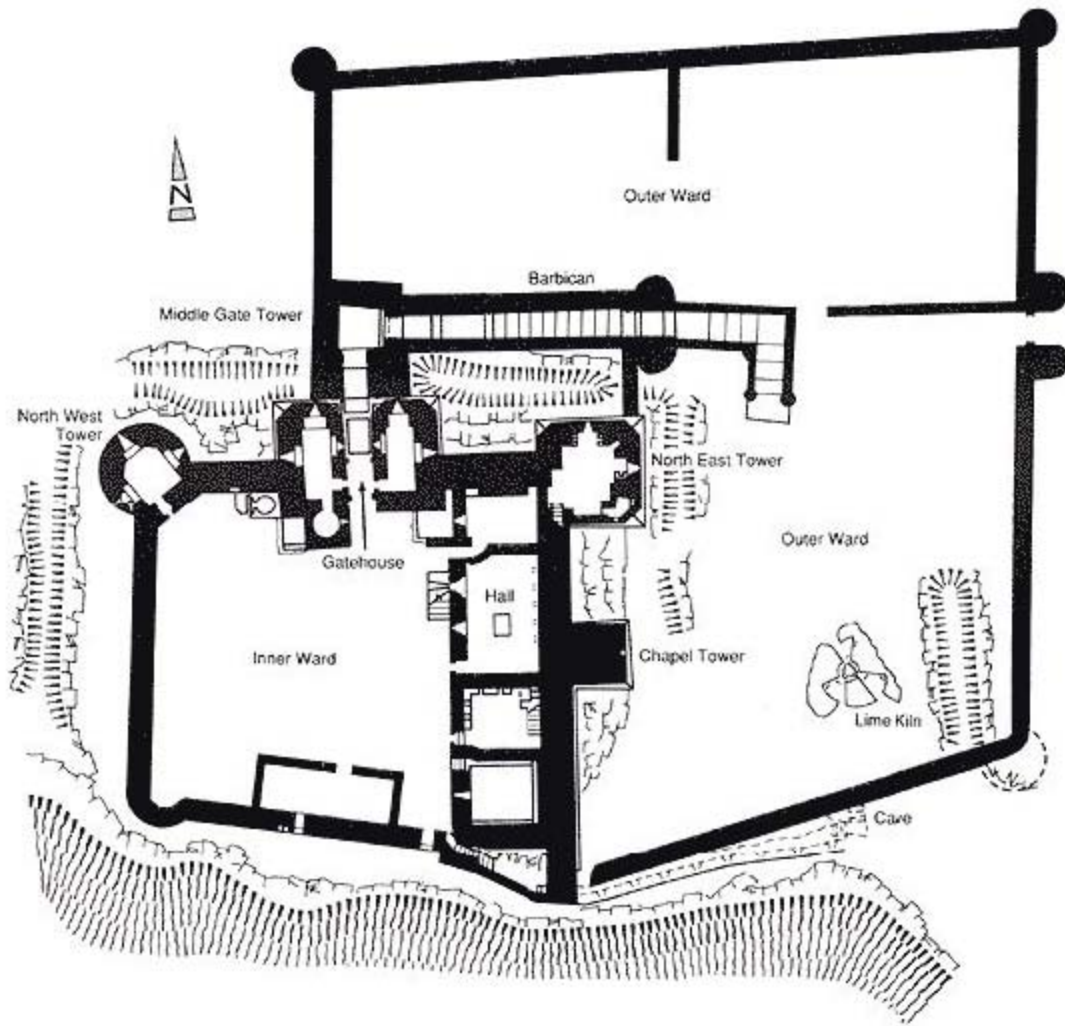


The elaborated ramped Barbican.



Entry to the inner ward: the remains of the Gatehouse.

King Urien ruled Carreg Cennen and Loughor, and on to Gower, where he is known as ‘Urien de Gore’ with a major Teilo church at Bishopston. Gower itself is dense with churches founded by the Celtic saints. We always used to go there for our holidays as children, since it was just opposite Llanelli, where we lived and I was born, and where on an island (now part of the town of Llanelli) St Samson retreated before leaving Britain.



The Tywi however, goes down to the sea at Carmarthen, a very important place in Roman times, with several Teilo foundations around, while on the upper route one finds yet another important foundation at Brechfa. One could go on and on! Apart from the monastic routine of prayer and worship, in their little cells monks would laboriously copy out the Gospels, later to strap them on their backs – to depart on their missionary journeys with their wooden staff, some food and very little else. All labourers and students had to be fed by the local farms, for which reason there would be a market place; Llandeilo must have been a very busy place.

The saints' 'Lives' contain stories of the native opposition to them in the form of local pagans. In one extract from St David's 'Life' by Rhygyfach, we see how Irish pirates who landed on the coastline around the west coasts of Britain could cause harassment to the indigenous population, viz:- when Teilo was helping David



build his monastery at a strategic place on the coast of Pembrokeshire, there is the grisly tale of the local chief, Boia, who had his settlement at Clegyr Boia close by. His wife took violent objection to David's monastery and sent her maidens to bathe naked in a nearby lake, to tantalise his monks, who were shocked by this suggestive behaviour and begged David to leave the place. He however stood his ground. Boia's wife then sat down and, taking her step-daughter, laid the girl's head on her lap, pretending to show her affection by combing her hair, but in pagan Druidical fashion had in fact taken out a knife and slit the girl's throat, cutting off her head. 'She seemed to have been seized by some demonic possession and then fled, her step-daughter having been duly sacrificed to her pagan gods'. Boia, himself a Druid as well as a chieftain, decided in his anger and distress to attack David's camp. By a strange coincidence however, that very night, another Irish raider named Liski invaded Boia's camp, cut off his head and burnt the camp to the ground.

Irish raiders were a constant threat to the coasts of Cardigan and Pembrokeshire. St David's was well-placed to give hospitality to all travellers by sea from the Mediterranean, Spain and Brittany, and between Ireland and the continent – travellers of all kinds, indeed not only traders but also pilgrims and monks. There were thus thousands of missionary saints trained to carry the Gospel of Christ to the people of Wales. Some of the most austere of these chose to live under great discipline, and we know David was one of them; Samson was another – he was to travel to Brittany and settle there, like Paul Aurelian, who became known later (as aforementioned) in northern Brittany as Paul de Leon. These men were all amongst Teilo's friends. The Welsh were a tribal people, so that after Teilo's death his nephews would have inherited his monastic sites in Llandeilo and also around the eastern area, where Llandaff was taken over by the later Normans. We have records of the development of the monastery at Llandeilo Fawr in the margins of the Lichfield Gospels, in the earliest known written Welsh.

PAULINUS THE SCRIBE the creator of the Gospel Book -

This Gospel Book is a magnificent example of a priceless collection, created in order to lie on the altar of an important church, Llandeilo monastery. It had considerably expanded in Teilo's time and become a powerful landowner even by 720, when a great king ruled in Dyfed, named Cathen, who was to give his name to Catheiniog in the Dryslwyn area, and to rule not only Dyfed but Brycheiniog also, as far as Hereford. The Marginalia in the Gospel Book show earlier bequests around the Llandeilo area.

It is therefore quite possible that this fine Gospel Book was indeed created for Llandeilo Fawr. In 1981 the suggestion was made that the first note in the margin was copied perhaps from older sources, written in Welsh, several of the final marginalia being in the time of Bishop Nobis, who was to take over for thirty-three years at Llandeilo Fawr from 840-873, but surprisingly the final name is that of Bishop Wynsi 974-992, in Lichfield. It would seem that the Gospel Book possibly left Llandeilo Fawr during Hywel Dda's reign. He was a fascinating character who united the whole of Wales. He married Elen of Dyfed, and put down in writing such far seeing laws for the whole of Wales. We have noted that King Ethelbert also put down in writing his laws for the people of Kent, and King Alfred wrote the laws for England, but perhaps Hywel Dda's laws were more far reaching than some laws even today, for instance for the position of women in society. It just appears to me that if indeed the laws of Hywel Dda were so wise, he perhaps had good reason or even much pressure to allow the Gospel Book to be safely housed at Lichfield for its own safety.

I think that it is now clear that Gelhi and others were Paulinus's contemporaries. Sadly it would take too long even to outline what was thought thirty years ago, although I have it all here, written to me at that time by many experts.

It does however make it clear that there were two men named Paulinus, living close to each other near Llandovery, one an old man returning home to create his Gospel Book, but the other a young man who had his life in front of him who set out for Brittany.

**This Book** now known as the Lichfield Gospels was once known

as the Gospels of Teilo, since it lay on the altar of Teilo, but is now also known as the Chad Gospels after the Bishop of that name, who died in 672, the Cathedral of Lichfield being founded by St Chad. Lichfield believe that the Gospel Book of Teilo was made for their cathedral, was stolen in a raid perhaps, and has now returned home. Today the Lindisfarne Gospels are also at Lichfield, so that both books are together. However I believe that the Lindisfarne Gospels are to be returned to Lindisfarne.

The Gospels of St Teilo are on show today at Lichfield Cathedral, who claim that it resembles the work of the Lindisfarne school; however there are other influences and we the Welsh people continue to believe that it originated from one of our great monasteries, namely from the altar at Llandeilo Fawr 1,200 years ago.

I can but repeat that the old Welsh handwriting (almost a scribble) in the margins is valuable in its own right, as it is the earliest written Welsh that has survived anywhere in the world; it tells us also that Cingal bought the Book from Gelhi<sup>xliv</sup> for the price of his best horse! Who Cingal was, or where this transaction took place we are not told, but patently it was very important for Cingal to give this most expensive gift to the church as the price perhaps of his eternal salvation. These men were contemporaries of old Paulinus the Scribe, and we note that St Teilo's foundation at Llandeilo Fawr already existed, and the precious Book was placed on its altar then.

How it came to be there however and how it departed thence must remain in the realm of speculation. That it is safer and better cared for where it is now is not disputed, for it has finally come to be cared for at Lichfield. The revised understanding of the marginalia, after my thirty year break, and the scholars' brilliant work on them, clarifies much that was not clear before.

A monastic settlement was a circular enclosure, together with three concentric walls or banks enclosing three areas of sanctity. Within the bank at the centre would be the monastery and the baptistry, and within the next the market cross and village settlements, while the outerbank would enclose an area of sanctity for the traveller, with chapels and crosses at various gates, where

the pilgrim could give thanks for a safe journey. The walls or banks would generally be earthen and the church of sawn oak with a rush roof (after the Irish style familiar to Teilo, since his patron was the aforementioned Christian King of that southern Irish dynasty, King Aircol Lawhir, who ruled Dyfed at this time). He must have spent considerable time in this area, since Grongar Hill near Llangathen church was named 'Argol' after him, his son Vortipor also being commemorated on a stone now in the Museum at Abergwili. The church was usually surrounded by small beehive cells for the monks, some in stone, but most of wattle and mud.

One monk per cell was the rule, the whole surrounded by an earthen bank as an enclosure and as protection for all the buildings, in which would usually be found a large wooden cross and an area for the monks' burial. The street plan would contain roads radiating out from the centre, often with gates at the four cardinal points, but there was no strict rule about this.

One only has to look around at the number of public houses with enormous cellars in Llandeilo Fawr today, to realise that this small country town was once a place of immense hospitality. This is a direct harking back to the days of the monastery, for, as it grew in reputation, so it was necessary to put up those trains of travellers, especially those from foreign parts. Even in St Teilo's time we know from the records of Monasterboice that its founder "St Buithe from north of Dublin in Ireland set off for Wales to study Christian ways and teaching under St Teilo; his large party of '150 true pilgrims' was supplemented by 'ten holy maidens'."

Apparently, St Teilo set Buithe the task of looking after the bees at Llandeilo. He returned to found in Ireland that monastery of considerable proportions, Monasterboice.

Perhaps Llandeilo also had, I quote again, "monks' quarters, an infirmary, refectory, cookhouse and a great building used as the house of hospitality, which normally provided entertainment for travellers to such great religious houses, since as a community they were numerous, prosperous and well patronised... and as a centre of learning, possessed a well furnished library."<sup>xlv</sup>

## **Llandeilo's position under Norman influence.**

### **The Book of Llandaff.**

When the Norman task of founding their cathedral at Llandaff began, Urban, who still called himself bishop of Glamorgan, set about building it beside the old church on the river Taff. He did away with Celtic Liturgy, while the Cathedral was now to come under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Norman jurisdiction of the Pope, no longer a separate and independent church with affiliations to the Eastern orthodox and Greek church.

The Book of Llandaff contains a collection of writings, mainly but not entirely legendary, of Norman perceptions of the Celtic Church and the various 'Lives' of the saints. The period was 1107 onwards. Finding that the written evidence was scarce, Urban did the best he could. The importance of St Teilo suffered thereby, but it is fairly certain that he was the major figure in Celtic Christianity by the end of his life. It is not however feasible to go into much more detail about Llandaff in this short sketch mainly about Llandeilo.

At Llandeilo it is not clear what happened, but Dr Wendy Davies has wrestled with the problem in 'An Early Welsh Microcosm' and 'The Llandaff Charters'. By 1093, William I had defeated the Welsh at Brecon. Soon after this the Chronicles of the Princes tell us: 'Then fell the Kingdom of the Britons' - and plunder, raiding and chaos ensued. Suffice to say the creation of Llandaff Cathedral from the ancient little church on the river Taff led to both the cult of St Teilo and the land grants being transferred to Llandaff (if the reader requires more detail it can be found in the Life of Oudoceus parts 1 and 2). This transfer from Llandeilo Fawr caused great resentment, the separate diocese of Menevia (St David's) being separated from St Teilo's, becoming akin to two separate fiefdoms. Llandaff claimed the prime see, although St David's once had the pallium, while today history repeats itself in the name of geographical convenience. Thus Llandeilo Fawr was separated from its own cult and became but a pawn in the diocese of St David's. Llandaff became all powerful, with a protracted erosion of Llandeilo's influence, but the normal visitor and reader

does not want this heady stuff! There are however some interesting stories to tell.

### **The monastic foundations of Talley Abbey and Whitland.**

Around 930, the King, Hywel Dda (Hywel the Good), gathered all his clergy and laymen to approve Laws he had collated for the people of Wales; these laws were gathered in from all over Wales, in many respects well in advance of the laws of our country even today; equal rights for women and the prime importance in law of the rights of the victim - and many more. Hywel arranged for the process to be ratified at Ty Gwyn ar Daf, (perhaps St Paulinus's old monastery, which was to become Whitland). Paulinus's monastery at Crug-y-bar was dispersed, but a number of farms around bear names like Maes Llan Urthwal (Paulinus's brother) and so on, about twelve farms in all, while the enormous and important Celtic foundation at Caio and all the land of Paulinus was to come under the Abbey of Talley, and to become subordinate to it, very similar to the fate of Llandeilo Fawr.

### **Talylychau (or the Head of the Lakes).**

To continue the story, it appeared good for Wales that the Lord Rhys was friendly with the new Norman Lords. It was he who founded the abbey of Strata Florida and also Talley Abbey in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; it was Premonstratensian, coming from Premontre, north of Paris, and started by St Norbert, who died as Archbishop of Magdeburg, Germany on June 6<sup>th</sup> 1134. The Order was introduced to England in 1143, Talley remaining however the only Premonstratensian order in Wales. Unlike the Cistercians they were canons who had parochial responsibilities, but wore the white Cistercian habit. There were also a number of female recluses at Talley under an Abbess, an Order which thrives on the continent today in many abbeys, but all that remains of Talley is its beautiful Norman arch.

The relevance of Talley Abbey is that in the Norman period, Llandeilo Fawr, Caio and all their surrounds came under the jurisdiction of Talley; our old Welsh church was almost completely eradicated and Normanised, a sad and sorry tale for Wales, for all records have become dispersed, destroyed or lost, historians today having a long and painful task ahead, if they wish to unravel it successfully.

### **Whitland**

Whitland was built on the site of the earlier 'White House' of Hywel Dda, on the river Taff, 'Ty Gwyn ar Daff', where old

Paulinus may have had a teaching monastery, and where the Normans built their Cistercian Abbey. Indeed Whitland was almost as influential in the area of Llandeilo Fawr and Dryslwyn, but it is likewise now in ruin since Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries.

### **A walk around Llandeilo today.**

First of all the church; it is certainly large; although recently the interior has been divided into two separate sections (for economy in heating and also to provide a hall for gatherings), we find that much of the historical evidence has been obliterated by 'restoration work' done by Gilbert Scott in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A circular wall surrounds the church and graveyard, the latter being divided into two sections, when a road was driven through in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There are several old crosses, two fine cross-heads being kept inside the church for preservation, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century respectively. There is a Baptistry in the churchyard at the east end of the church, which had a grave within it, <sup>xlvi</sup> while spring water flows out under the south eastern wall.

A road also surrounds the graveyard wall; on the sunny east side one finds Abbey Terrace, which has Ogee windows set into the walls of an old garden, part of which is the main public car park.

There is a memorial cross outside the wall, facing the shops on the North east side, while a road runs sharply uphill to what could have been an entrance gateway to the town from the northern road, now the A40.

From the cross again, proceeding uphill, the main road runs through the town, Rhosmaen Street, with what may have been another entrance gate, down the other side leading to Llandovery. The steep north bank can be traced along the back of our former Welsh home in Brynawel Terrace. During this period a considerable amount of new building has altered the site of Llandeilo Fawr, which throughout my own lifetime remained unchanged as in this picture until the 1990s or thereabouts. The southern aspect follows a vaguely circular route around the

outside of the Abbey garden, along the Crescent and thence, going very steeply down from the church to the suspension bridge, is the old road, *Heol Rheged*, no longer, as mentioned before, on the ordnance survey map since about 1850 or thereabouts. Further along, outside the church wall, is another very steep road, Quay Street, which may or may not have been a landing place for boats, since the river was tidal in days gone by, before the estuary became totally

silted up at Carmarthen. Now the main road through the centre of the cemetery goes steeply down the hill to Llandeilo Bridge.

### **The Monastic City of Llandeilo Fawr.**

Close by the bridge is the church of St Tyfei (Teilo's nephew and Oudoceus's brother), at Llandyfeisant, built on the site of a Roman temple in Dynevor Park, through which a Roman road leads to the castle, and now we know also that it leads to the very large Roman fort, built in AD 70. The park is particularly lovely, with wild deer and flowers all along the River Tywi, which flows down to the sea, past Dryslwyn castle and through that beautiful valley leading to Carmarthen and the estuary at Ferryside. It is an idyllic setting. Our cottage was in this picture, but sadly we have sold it.



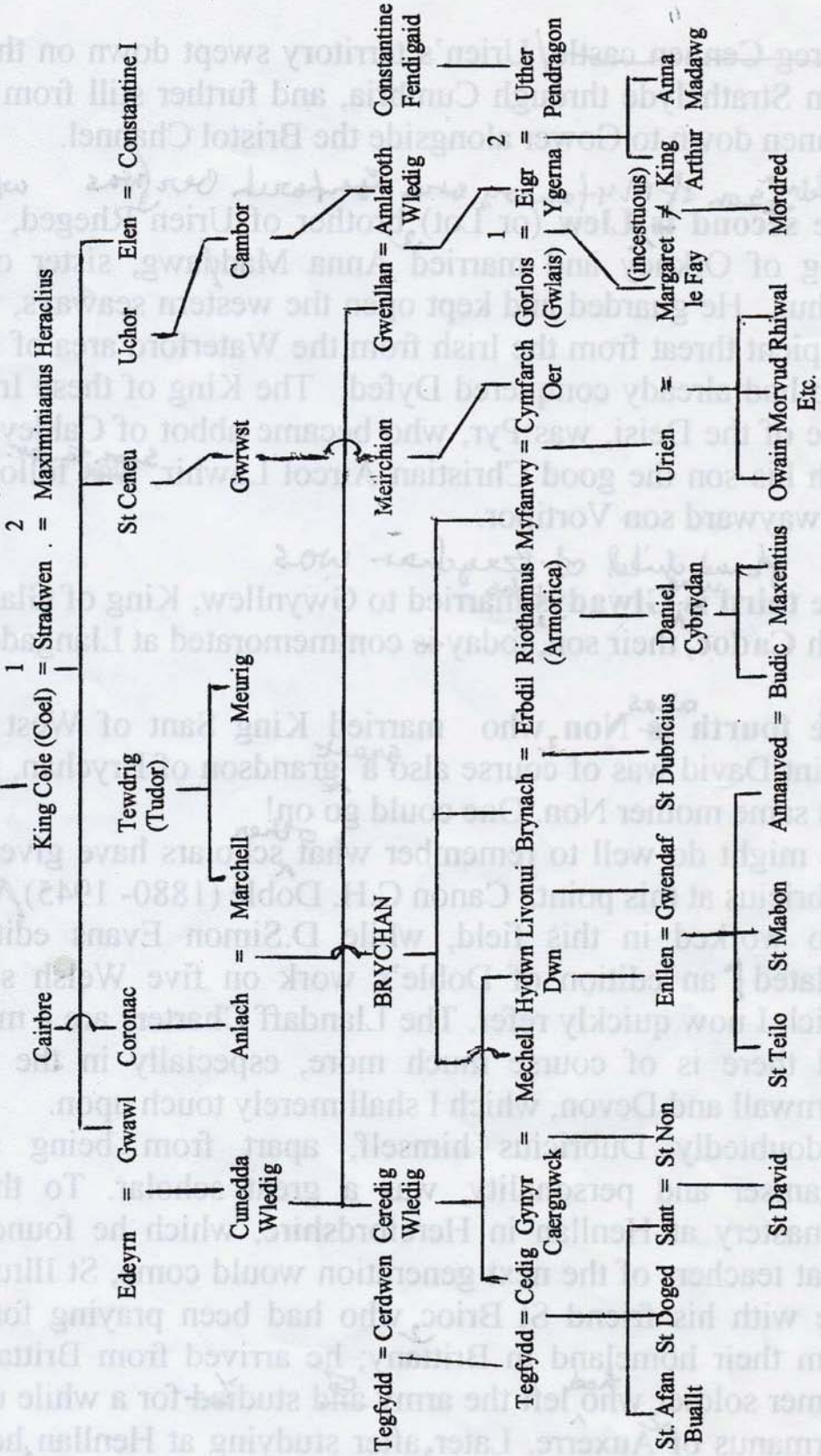
**We can clearly see the shape of Llandeilo in this air photograph, which suggests a monastic city, but since it is spreading rapidly.**

(I believe this air photograph was taken by Terry James before his early and untimely death).



### SOME GRANDSONS OF BRYCHAN.

(5 further generations back to Caractacus & 8 to King Lud)



A limited summary of V.I.Ps mentioned so far may now be of help: SOUTH WALES.

### **Beloved Valley**

Both Llandeilo Fawr in the centre and

*the Southern half of this valley*

as far as Dinevor and Dryslwyn Castles, as guardians and protectors of the valley.

BRITAIN.

Ambrosius Aurelianus King Perphirius,  
Uther Pendragon, Constantine Fendigade Paul Aurelian,  
Arthur, Dubricius(Cornwall /Devon)

King Perphirius moved with his family from Bovium in Glamorgan to Llandovery to Llwyn y Brain (the grove of the princes).

Llys Brychan, Brychan's home below Including the castle of Carreg Cennen, and Carn Goch Fort.

– near Llandeilo

### **Brychan**

Brychan married three times, with many children and grand children becoming the next generation of Christian saints. Grandsons of Brychan, Dubricius from Henllan in Herefordshire, in overall charge of the spread of Christianity in Wales and the west, including Cornwall and Devon. Teilo was a cousin of David, both grandsons of Brychan. Urien Rheged, also a grandson of Brychan, ruled the western kingdom of Rheged, and Strathclyde including Cumbria and in Wales – Carreg Cennen castle near Llandeilo, and down the river Cennen to Loughor and Gower.

(Soldiers and mobile)

Uther Pendragon (father of Arthur) and Urien Rheged (a cousin of Arthur) were both grandsons of Brychan ruling

*both north up to Dolaucothi Gold mines and down to*

Llandeilo Fawr in the centre and the Southern half of this valley as far as Dinevor and Dryslwyn Castles, guardians and protectors of the valley.

Samson's parents:-

Amman Ddu from Brittany, who married Anna from Glamorgan, to live in the Black mountains

(Ddu being Welsh for black.) Bryn Amman (bryn=hill), a mirror image of Brittany.

Llys Brychan, Brychan's home near Llandeilo below Carreg Cennen Castle, and Carn Goch Fort. Brychan married three times, with many children and grandchildren becoming the next generation of Christian saints. Grandson's Family Tree Dubricius from Henllan in Herefordshire and in overall charge of Wales and the west. Some grandsons of Brychan Teilo, David, & Urien Rheged who ruled the Kingdom of Strathclyde (east Scotland) Rheged, Cumbria, Carreg Cennen, and down the river Cennen to Loughor and Gower, with innumerable cousins as saints of Cornwall and Devon.

. The Dolaucothi gold mines, being only ten miles north of Llandeilo, undoubtedly meant that this area required special defences. When the Romans were in Britain an enormous fort for two thousand soldiers was built in AD 70 at Llandeilo, later reduced to the normal size for 500 men. But now, the Romans had left our country, returning to defend their city of Rome by 410 AD, leaving Britain defenceless. The convolutions that followed, as we know, had both religious and political motives, but they are far too complex to analyse here! The western seaways had certainly to be protected, for Irish raids were increasing, while Brittany was gaining in importance to Britain also.

**Pembrokeshire and Dyfed (Welsh/Irish dynasty) ‘Peregrinati’** (*means those in danger*) whose destiny and mission was to leave all, and go out into the unknown.

In Brittany (little Britain) Illtud and Brioc had prayed for Wales. Amman Ddu from Brittany, grandson of St Patrick’s sister, married Anna of Glamorgan, becoming parents of Saint Samson and settling in Wales.

The Celtic period in Britain was comparatively short, but its influence was immense. Today we are turning to it with renewed interest, since archaeology and historical research in various fields have uncovered so much of which we were formerly unaware. Until recently this period was dismissed as the ‘Dark Ages’. Roman occupation ended when their armies returned to defend Rome in AD 410, leaving their occupied lands in Britain vulnerable to attack from the Saxons in the east in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>

centuries. Later the Vikings in the 7<sup>th</sup> century were to raid the monasteries, destroying and pillaging the length of our massive coastline from the seas. However written evidence is scarce, for Celtic culture was ancient but an oral one, that is to say the Bards were highly trained in their religious schools, but committed everything to memory; their training started early, lasting until they were at least twenty years old, bardic families very often passing the wisdom on to their children. Sadly the Romans carried out a tremendous slaughter of these families, which led to Boadicea’s resistance. Again the Saxons were to do likewise in Anglesey and Bangor Iscoed.

Saint Teilo’s brother-in-law King Budic had previously fled to Britain, when his twin brother took control of south east Brittany, and King Budic was forced to flee for his life. He found himself in south Wales, where he settled for some time, and was eventually to marry Annaued, St Teilo’s sister. Of their children Heol eventually succeeded his father Budic as King, leaving Ishmael, Tyfei, Oudoceus, Theodoric and Meliau as Teilo’s nephews, several of whom returned to Britain when the plague was abated, and became famous saints in their own right in the next generation in Britain.

However clearly I have followed the evidence that Teilo’s family were later connected with King Budic in Brittany.

## The Dynasty of King Budic and St Teilo's nephews' rule in Glamorgan.

### **Riothamus**

(leader of 2<sup>nd</sup> emigration of British to Brittany).

**Daniel Dremund (Cybrydan) St Teilo**, died 580-600 **StMabon**, **Annaued**=Budic's twin

Maxentius, Prince of Cornouaille expelled his brother Budic from Brittany. **Heol**, St Ishmael, St Tyfei, St Oudoceus (succeeded St Teilo);

**Theodoric** m = Enhinti and they returned from Brittany to rule in 577; he retired as a hermit to Tintern; and handed over the kingdom to **Mouric** their son, who experienced expanding power throughout his reign in Erging, and as under-ruler in Demetia. He was an ally of Mercia and enemy of the West Saxons. He named his son after his father **Theodoric**.

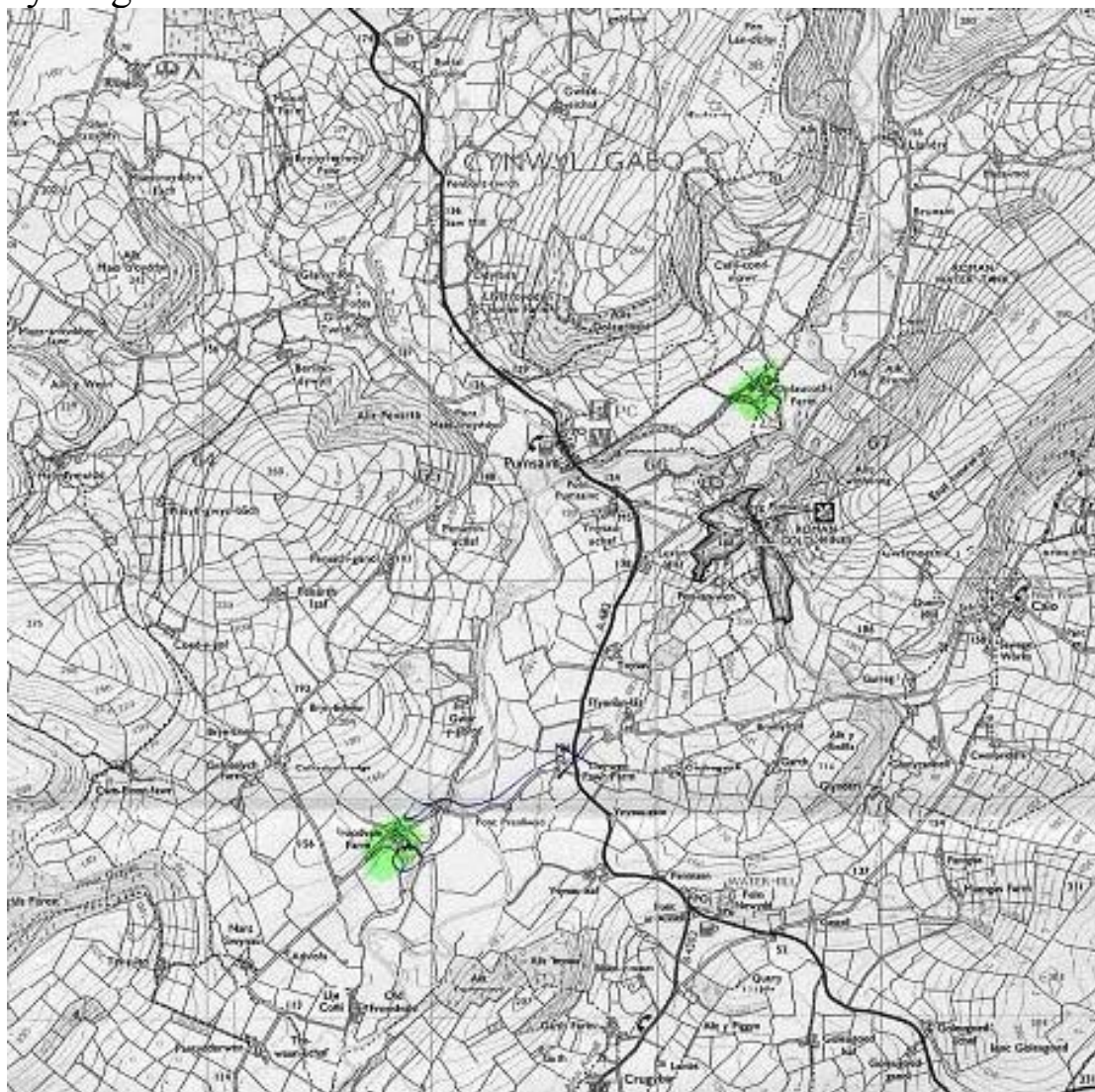
## Chapter Nine

### PAULINUS THE SCRIBE The Gospel Book

My early introduction to the Gospel Book. When the Second World War began, my family were living at 29 Eaton Crescent in the Uplands of Swansea. The Edmund Davies family lived next door and their eldest daughter – also ‘Ann’, with her birthday on the same day, but unlike me without an ‘e’ at the end of her name! and a year younger!! I have a photograph of our joint birthday party in our garden. Her father was Recorder of Swansea at that time, while great lifelong friends of ours also were the Astley Samuel family, who lived on the other side of the road.

It had been such a happy time - that autumn of 1939; my sister Mary was just four; I was seven and I remember sitting at the top of the stairs with my bucket and spade, ready to go to the beach, when my mother came up to tell me that we could not go to the beach, because war had broken out. How could I understand what that had to do with our going to the beach, until that very night we received our first air raid! One aeroplane came over Swansea and we all huddled in the strongest place in the house – the passage between the hall and the kitchen; the following day a large furniture van came round to pick up our beds and mattresses, while Mary and I followed in a bus, I seem to recall – but I do remember well being driven in the school coach up the drive to Dolaucothi House in Caio, near the gold mines, my much younger sister being put to live in the Home Farm with the other little ones. And here we stayed! I have so many memories of this time, all the children being from Parc Wern School in Sketty, which Mary and I attended at the time. I remember the beds were all laid out in the Hall at Dolaucothi House, when we arrived. I remember so well also that picnic in the gold mines, when I sat down to eat my sandwiches on that ants’ nest; they didn’t actually sting, but I was wearing shorts, whereby creepy crawlies became more than a surprise! The searchlights would also come out at night, when an aeroplane flew over, and we children were quite sure that it was dropping an enemy spy; and I learnt to ride a bicycle, when the boys offered to help me, by taking me up the slope in the drive, which led to the front door of the house, and gently pushing me – I stayed on the bike until I reached the front door and then turned

right down some beautiful steps, which in fact became two or three separate lots of steps, until at the end of course I landed in that bed of stinging nettles! This was my first introduction also to cycling!



Mary lived at the Home Farm in Dolaucothi (above), whilst those who were over five, like me, lived at Dolaucothi House.<sup>xlviii</sup> But the end came when my little sister offered to other children some ‘sweeties’ which she had found (they looked like Polo mints), but at the end of the day they turned out to be slug pellets and, since none of us were sure if we had eaten them or not, a doctor was sent for from Llandeilo (ten miles away) in the middle of the night, to give the whole school salt and water emetics! This brought my parents to say ‘Enough is enough!’ and my mother came up to take us away to live with Mrs Powell, Penbryn, The Crescent, Llandeilo, where we were billeted, to join another school which had been evacuated from Kent, at Tregyb, Ffairfach, Llandeilo, below us in the valley.



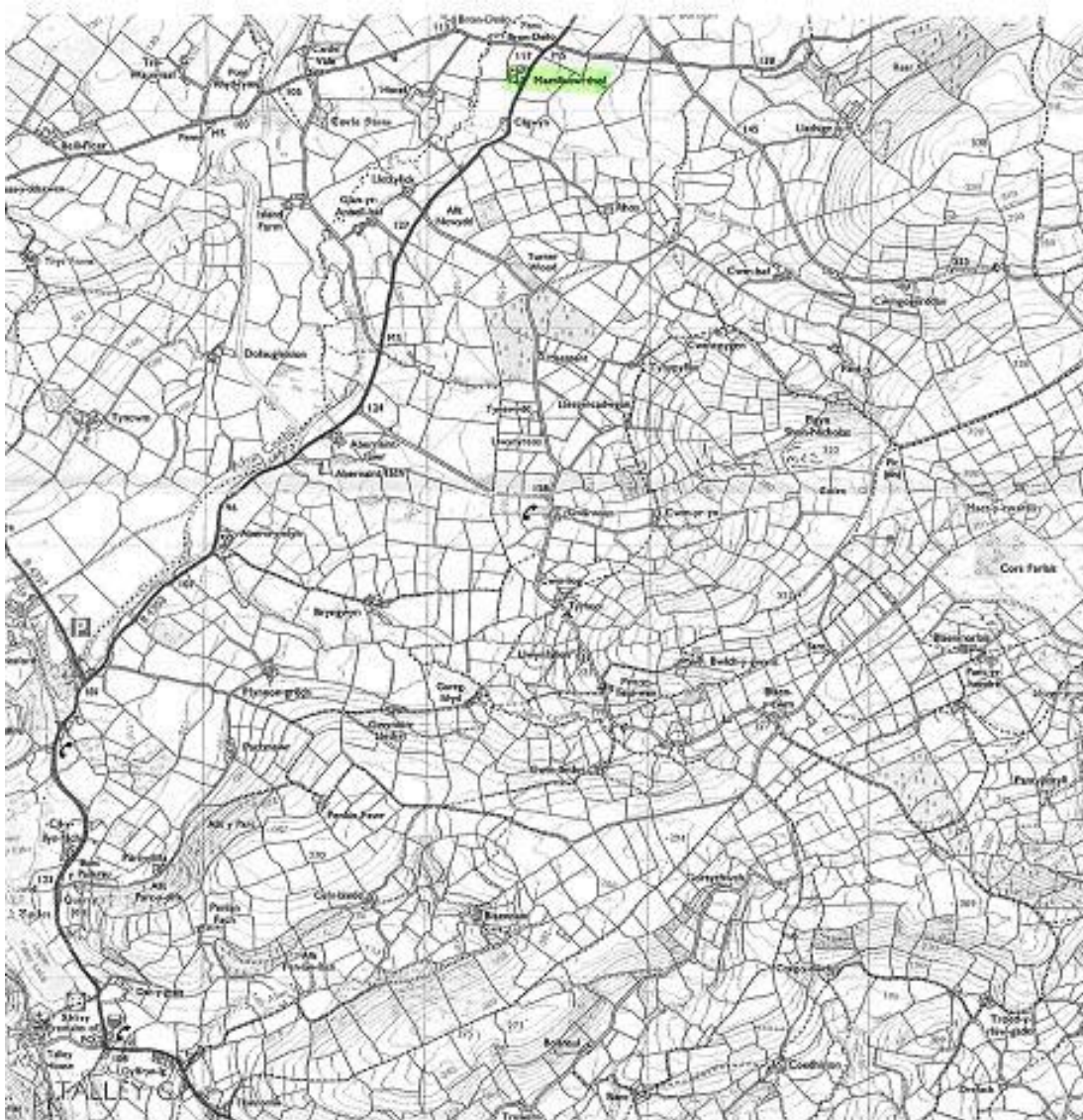
This school was 'Queen Bertha's school', from Birchington in Kent. Mary and I would walk with my mother early in the morning all the way to school; it could be bitterly cold and soon we began to develop chilblains! and, as we walked one day, I remember my mother slipping on the steep part of the road near Saint Teilo's Spring and Mary and I laughing - poor Mummy; she would recite French verbs as we walked over the bridge at Llandeilo, for she had perfect French and it was all rather fun for us children – not that I have had much use for irregular French verbs since!

But eventually my mother decided that we were happily settled at school, so that she was able to return to Llanelly, where my father as a longer term mine owner had made a warm and cosy home out of that colliery bungalow, which he owned – it was a long wooden bungalow, surprisingly large inside, but always welcoming - for Daddy's coal of course was always on the spot; I remember gazing into the large fire and imagining all sorts of things, for there is nothing like a coal fire to keep changing the scene for an imaginative child. I loved it there, for occasionally my mother would allow me to go into the stream behind the bungalow, to fetch water from the spring; I will never forget the beautiful taste of that cool water; so many happy memories linger in my mind! But of course there were bombs also in that industrial area of Llanelly, for the colliery could not be moved. We had to stay at school in Tregyb over the long hot summer holiday sometimes, for safety reasons, several adults being increasingly upset, losing husbands in the war, or children their fathers, while our school buildings left behind in Kent were being knocked about by the soldiers billeted there. In spite of the idyllic countryside at Tregyb, there could be bullying from dreadfully upset children, causing adults also to become increasingly fretful. So it was better to go home, if we could in the long summer holidays. These are my first memories of the Welsh countryside, which also meant living close to the gold mines of Dolaucothi, and visiting various aunts at Dryslwyn, where they might give us eggs (when food rationing allowed only one each week!) amid fine country cheer in that delightful countryside with all those stories about the past and our family! And of course climbing the castle of Dryslwyn itself!

There were wonderful times too, when we could ride on horseback, help with the harvest, setting up those corn stooks in the fields belonging to my cousins at Glandulas Fawr, in Dryslwyn, and so much else besides, while even writing about it as an introduction for others to a place that means so much to me still today gives me enormous pleasure.

Every Sunday the whole school would march over Llandeilo Bridge in a crocodile, two by two, wearing our 'pudding basin hats' and gloves, to sit in those two front rows in Llandeilo Church for morning service; then down the hill back again for lunch; thereafter we would again don those hats and gloves, to march once more in that crocodile straight up to Trapp, a very steep hill, where we would pick rose hips 'for the war effort', which the government had asked people to do, 'since they were so rich in vitamin C'. In winter I recall also the scream of that poor pig, echoing across the hills in the mist, as it was slaughtered in one of the mountain farms - but I am digressing again.

There is now an important part of this narrative, waiting to be told, before I can move forward, for what used to be a small tidal market town, Llandeilo, with its church, fisheries and rich pasture land, developed into a wonderful place for a monastery, with many inns and deep cellars for hospitality.<sup>xlix</sup> It became especially the centre for visiting parties of princes and monks, who would come to study in the monastery under St Teilo - and down the ages later. We read, for instance of the founder of that wonderful centre in Ireland, Monasterboice, founded by St Buithe, who came to study under St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr with his entourage.<sup>1</sup> St Teilo gave him the task of caring for the bees there, and studying their ways. This book is a plea for more than just sentiment; it carries a vitally important message from the past. We now know that in AD 70 a Roman fort was built one mile away from Llandeilo, in Dynevor Park, to house 2000 soldiers. One is aware that the Dolaucothi gold mines, formerly mined by the Welsh, were developed by those Romans, who also built a 7-mile hypocaust, and another smaller one just 4miles long, both of which can still be discovered in winter, before the summer foliage hides them away.



Above is a southern continuation of the first map on page 134. I have marked MaesllanUrthwal above, the site of old St Paulinus's birth and death.

This is where the Gospel Book originated, showing farms, Churches and residences, and other buildings which still bear the names of their inhabitants – ‘MaesllanUrthwal’ (Urthwal = Paulinus's brother) and near Talley, Cefn Blaidd (Blaidd = Welsh for Wolf, and Lupus in Latin, Germanus of Auxerre's fellow

<sup>li</sup> Bishop). Bron Deilo, also included on this map, shows us the presence of St Teilo not a few miles from his main centre at

<sup>lii</sup> Llandeilo Fawr. Glanville R.J. Jones's article is entitled ‘*Tir*

<sup>liii</sup> *Telych the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Caeo.*’ Tir Telych is recorded in Chad 4, in the margins of the Gospel Book. The article talks of the change in the boundary line of the river

Cothi, which affected the deposits of gold which may have been deposited in the river after washing. He also gives a fine picture of the early medieval life in the area.

At the time of the Roman occupation, it was State controlled, i.e. Rome controlled and operated three Gold mines. The most important was at Rio Tinto (Spain), second in importance being Pumpsaint (Wales) and the third was in Austria/Hungary. It was gold which had brought the original developers, and later those from the Rio Tinto gold mines in Spain, such as the future Emperor of Rome, Magnus Maximus, coincidentally to meet and to marry our Queen Elen of Wales, a friend and disciple of St Martin of Tours. To me this gives us a vision of how God works His purpose out in people who truly seek to give their lives to Him. We ourselves are only too frail and fallible, but when someone like St Martin can give himself totally to God, God can take him seriously, and the blessing this brings to our tired earth reverberates down the centuries.

The title of my work here is '*The Cult of St Martin*', and one must be aware that the Spaniard Magnus Maximus's marriage to Queen Elen was probably due to the fact that he may have come originally to Cao<sup>liv</sup> for the Roman development of the Gold mine in this area, Rio Tinto in Spain being the most important centre of the activity of gold mining at that time. The fact that Paulinus the Scribe was born close to the Dolaucothi gold mine, and also connected with Germanus and Lupus, the bishops who were based not very far from Marmoutier and the cult of St Martin, is also of interest. Cao Church is an extension of the Roman Tower Fort, built in the AD70s, where the original entrance is high off the ground, accessed by a ladder. However it is clear from the fact that the 'tower' of the church needs a ladder, which could be withdrawn to protect those inside from intruders, indicating that this was once a defensive measure to protect the soldiers inside, when it was a fort, at the height of the Roman occupation near that gold mine with a large contingent of slaves to do the hard work. Later the fort at Dynevor, also built in the mid or late AD 70s, was reduced from 2000 to 500 soldiers, similar to the other holding forts across Wales. Clearly there was a large demand for food supply, and the Marginalia show us surrounding parcels of land

given to the church, to meet this demand. From the very substantial gold workings in the Roman period, Glanville Jones tells us that gold workings in the Roman period produced gold<sup>rd</sup> bullion and handworked jewelry, some of which of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century were found in the “Common field” on the Dolaucothi estate.

At a later date the fort at Caoe was incorporated into the surprisingly large church, a ‘Mother Church’ dedicated to St David; he features so importantly here, for he healed Old Paulinus the Scribe of his blindness, on his way to Llandewi Brevi, where David now was to be acclaimed Archbishop of Wales after his great speech against Pelagianism.

However in Dewi’s time, and I quote Professor Bowen here:

A major Roman fort had existed at Pumpsaint<sup>lv</sup> to guard and administer the Gold mine. This was also later reduced, and workshops were built to work the gold into jewelry and coins.

The gold itself was washed and refined, but Glanville Jones’s article on the altering course of the river Cothi, and thus the site of Tir Telych in this area, may have meant that deposits of possible value from this process were affected by the change of boundary. One can see that, as scholars discover these details, the most amazing hidden factors emerge.

When the Saxon invaders reached Wales, one may be sure that they knew about the gold mine and set their hearts on plundering it. Burial in the ground was the only way to safely hide this jewelry and gold, and finds have been discovered recently. Someone even buried a horde in the grounds of Dolaucothi House itself, close to the gold mine, and with metal detectors more has been found buried even in England (jewelry which is claimed to be Saxon, especially in the neighbourhood of Lichfield, but even in the boat at Sutton Hoo, possibly foundering on the coast when it was heading abroad with its treasure), but more likely it was a burial. We do not know. But I am not aware of another such gold mine in this country with such skilled workers who could fashion such beautiful jewelry as that produced at Pumpsaint; even gold torcs were also shipped to Ireland. Does Ireland even have a gold mine? Certainly gold from Pumpsaint in Wales could have been worked in Ireland, but maybe it was already worked in Wales<sup>lvi</sup> before shipment. I cannot say.

The close connections between Wales and Ireland over the centuries could have included shipments of raw gold to workshops in Ireland also (if they existed).

At this time, that is 1981, I received letters which I have in my possession, from some of the experts in the field on their interpretations of the provenance of these Marginalia.<sup>lvii</sup> Just to remind ourselves how far scholars have worked since that period, I show first what scholars believed in 1981 about the Gospel Book, and then how their findings have developed since.

**(Below were the findings of Morfyd Owen and Dafyd Jenkins in their ‘Welsh Marginalia’, written at that time i.e. before 1981).**

**The first marginal note** -The old Welsh handwriting (almost a scribble) in the margins remains valuable in its own right, since it remains the earliest written Welsh from anywhere in the world; it tells us also that Cingal bought the Book from Gelli for the price of his best horse! Who Cingal was or where this transaction took place, we are not told, but patently it was very important for Cingal to give this most expensive gift to the church as the price perhaps for his eternal salvation. These men were contemporaries of old Paulinus the Scribe, and we note that St Teilo’s foundation at Llandeilo Fawr already existed, for that precious Book was placed on its altar at that time. How it came to be there however and how it departed thence must remain in the realm of speculation. That it is safer and better cared for where it is now is not disputed, for it has finally come to be cared for at Lichfield. The revised understanding of the Marginalia, after my thirty year break and our scholars’ brilliant work on them, clarifies much that was not clear before.

**The second** marginal note concerns Caeo, eleven miles north of Llandeilo.

**The third and fourth** references mention Trewyddog in the parish of Llan-crys, fourteen miles to the north, while

**the fifth** is written at Llandeilo Fawr by a professional scribe; both **the third and fifth** are late ninth century.

**The sixth** mentions Llandebie, six miles south east of Llandeilo,

written by an even less skilled hand. Here again I find that even from my childhood I retain early memories of the site of the sixth marginalia. The house of Derwydd itself does not belong to the time of the marginalia. Miss Stepney Gulston lived there and, before I was born, when my mother lived at Bryn-ar-y-mor, Furnace village, Llanelli, her father's home, she asked my mother to form a Girl Guide company the 'Fifth Llanelly', which she did in the stables belonging to the house. It consisted of the girls in the village, and my mother loved doing it until her marriage. During the Second World War, I remember Dewydd housed a girl's school, which my friend Margaret Enthoven attended, and I can recall she took me once in holiday time to meet Miss Stepney Gulston. Now long after, when the next generation of the family lived there, the husband was taken seriously ill in London, and by now we too were good friends so we put his wife up in our house until he was better for a week or so, they asked us to stay with them and offered to put us up in Sir Rhys ap Thomas's bed; 'It is very comfortable', she said. I gazed at the mediaeval carving of a hunting scene surrounding the mattress – 'How lovely' I thought – but when she told us that the passage outside was haunted, we politely declined and opted for her usual guest bedroom!

The script of the Gospel Book itself is known as 'insular half-uncial', there being a gradual change in style from the Roman after the sixth century, while the monogrammed letters at the beginning of each Gospel resemble Irish work at its finest.<sup>lviii</sup>

Certainly our understanding today of the Marginalia in the Gospel Book is very different to that of our perception 30 years ago, exemplified by this article by Glanville Jones published in 1994, which gives us a totally different perspective on the Marginalia. (I have not yet had the opportunity to seek the author's permission to use these articles).<sup>lix</sup>

*“Tir Telych according to the ‘Surexit’ memorandum was in the hand of Elgu the son of Gelli of the llwyth (kindred or tribe) of Idwared”* (Idwared means ‘prince deliverer’). Gelli's ancestor was probably of royal standing. It is written c840, in the oldest Welsh which has survived.

Glanville Jones continues by saying: “at least three of the ‘Chad’

***Marginalia**, and possibly as many as five, appear to have a bearing on some aspects of these tentative interpretations of the rival claims advanced in the ‘Surexit’ dispute.*

*This is particularly true of **Chad 1** which records that Gelli, son of Arthudd bought ‘this Gospel’ from Cingal and gave him in return a very good horse; and for his soul he gave the Gospel to God on the altar of Teilo... The Elgu of **Chad 2** was probably the son of the Gelli ap Arthudd recorded in Chad 1 as the donor of the Gospel. Presumably it was because of the father’s generosity that the son was allowed to record in the Gospel Book the outcome of the ‘Surexit’ dispute and thus to provide enduring proof of his proprietorship of the ‘Tir Telych’. Moreover, it is not improbable that Gelli, who was prosperous enough to have purchased the Gospel Book, had preceded his son in the proprietorship of the coveted ‘Tir Telych’.”*

***Chad 3** records the gift of Trefwyddog over which bondmen or villeins exercised landed rights made by ‘Rhys and the tribe (llwyth) of Gelli to God, and St Eliud.’ (i.e. Teilo).*

*The grant of land, which **Chad 4** records, was within an area whose outer limits were defined by the following features: the **standing stone** called Hirfaen Gwyddog; the **stream** called Camddwr; the **wood** called Gelli Irlath; and less precisely a **battlefield** which was almost certainly near the sepulchral mound known as Bedd y Milwr (the soldiers grave - which was Lorna Blandy’s name for it near Maesllanurthwal); “It marked the terrible battle between the Welsh and the Romans”, she said (rather than the ‘Sais’ or Saxons). “It consists of a triangular piece of land in the parish of Llan-y-crwys, in the north-western part of Cwmwd Caeo. The donors were one Rhys and other named individuals, of whom there were at least three.”*

***Chad 5** records a gift of liberty to Bleiddudd ap Sulien and his progeny for ever and ever in return for a payment ... of silver. Bleddri and his four sons (all freed bondmen now) probably lived near Llandeilo Fawr.*

***Chad 6** refers to a substantial farm in the parish of Llandebie (Carm).*

***Chad 7** records a donation of a hillside (or wood, near Talley*



Abbey), by Morfarch Tundred to God and to St Eliud.

An earlier article on the Marginalia comes in C.U.P Agrarian History of England and Wales, ed. J.Thirsix, 1972.

*The marginal entries in the Book of St Chad (p.p 308-321).*<sup>lx</sup>

This article deals with the area around Llandebie in *Chad 6*, together with a helpful map on page 309. It discusses the organisation of early Welsh society around 850, saying it was on an aristocratic basis. Two food renders were given from this well-watered area, in summer and in winter. Sir John Lloyd<sup>lxi</sup> goes into this in further detail, while his article also gives an interesting account of social organisation generally in this area, saying that ‘... it shows that it was much more stable than that until recently envisaged.’

The Reverend William Strange wrote a brilliant article in 2002<sup>lxii</sup>, which was wide-ranging and most interesting and which I would love to copy in full! Suffice it to say that it delves in much more detail upon the topics I have already mentioned. He was Vicar in Llandeilo for some years whilst we had a cottage there, and he also wrote some historical pieces in the Parish Magazine at that time.

Confusion arose about two men associated with this area, both named Paul or Paulinus.

*It was as a result of the bank manager, Mr Williams’s research that we have the breakthrough; I confirm once again that there were two men, brought up in the same area, ‘Paulinus the Scribe’, who wrote the Gospel Book here, which is now in Lichfield Cathedral and the second Paul Aurelian or ‘Potolius’ who founded Pol de Leon in Brittany. Let us therefore now be precise.*

In 844, Wrmonoc, a Breton monk and historian, came across an ancient manuscript dating back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, which mentioned an old Celtic saint named Paulinus.

Paul Aurelian (Potolius).

So we now return to Canon Doble’s confusion when he also discovered the next piece of writing referring to Paul Aurelian.

Mr Rhys Dafys Williams, the retired Bank Manager, quoted a passage about Paul Aurelian, who emigrated to Brittany.

*Born in the land of the Brythoniaid (Britons) of mixed marriage – Roman and British – hence the name Paulinus and which in the past caused the confusion of identity. At the end of the Roman occupation, many families had adopted Roman names ...*

As the quotation continues; we find that this reference is to Paul Aurelian the son of King Perphirius, who lived near Llandoverly, having moved there with his family from Cowbridge, near Llanilltud Fawr, in present day Glamorgan. This monastery housed some 2000 pupils just as did Dubricius's monastery earlier at Mocros in Herefordshire, which St Illtud attended as an adult. Paul Aurelian's parents however had settled at a place, probably near where 'Llwyn y Brain' now stands, a house just outside Llandoverly. He studied under St Illtud in Glamorgan from an early age and, as an adult, emigrated to Brittany with twelve companions, to found Pol de Leon in northern Brittany. (Likewise St Samson was eventually called to live in Brittany, so that we will return to these two saints later).

Canon Doble was confused by Wrmonoc's writing – the Breton monk, not surprisingly I repeat, did not realise that there were two Christians born in the same area, both named Paulinus, whereby the confusion arose. However we are indebted to Christian historians such as Mr Rhys Dafys Williams<sup>lxiii</sup> and Canon Doble, who were seeking to tease out the facts in historical evidence. The confusion arose when Canon Doble also discovered the origin of Paul Aurelian. Although both men were brought up in the same area and both named Paul or Paulinus, however Paulinus the Scribe must have been in Rome, being tutored by the Pope and learning to be a Scribe, when Paul Aurelian was born. It was Paulinus the Scribe who shows us in his art his real connection with Coptic art in his stunning portrait of St Luke on page 218 of his manuscript.

The late Mrs Lorna Blandy took me to the site where the monastery of Maesllanurthwal once stood, and introduced me to the farmer's wife who lived there, who told us of the bell which used to sit on the wall in the front garden of her house.

Mrs Blandy later handed me an account of old St Paulinus (the Scribe), which she had jotted down, and from which I now summarise. A local historian, born in Llangadoc and brought up at Glansevin, Mrs Blandy now lived at 'Dolaubran', a house just outside Llandovery, where I stayed with her once. She lived in that area most of her life. Her notes begin by describing the old

Roman roads in the area.<sup>lxiv</sup> She confirmed that this Saint Paulinus the Scribe also built and used the church of St Paulinus in Ystradffin (near the reservoir), which was reopened by the Lord

Bishop of St Davids, the Right Reverend George Noakes.<sup>lxv</sup> Our Gospel Book, which was placed on the altar at Llandeilo Fawr, was indeed written locally by this Paulinus the Scribe, explained Mrs Blandy.

Who then was - ST PAULINUS THE SCRIBE?

Canon Doble in 1942 remarked that '*The Demetian Kalendar alone commemorates him – for it is referred to in the Cwrtmawr MS 44 of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.*'

Canon Doble writes again - '*We can now understand where the Book of Teilo, now in Lichfield Cathedral, was written and who wrote it. Paulinus the Scribe was a great and holy man. A disciple of the holy Bishop in Rome, and Saint Germanus. Paulinus was sent to him after his ordination to the priesthood.*'

We understand that during his stay with the Pope, this same Paulinus (the Scribe) was studying in the part of the world which was at the centre of the development of flourishing Christian Iconography. Sister Wendy Beckett has produced her book entitled 'The Real Presence.'<sup>lxvi</sup> Paulinus returned from Rome to stay with Germanus for further study, returning with him later to his homeland in Britain, and remained in Wales to teach and eventually to produce the Gospel Book himself. He had had the opportunity to travel to see icons at their centres around the

Mediterranean and, being no mean artist himself, eventually to make his own Gospel Book at his brother Urthwal's monastery in his own home. His teaching must have been inspirational also, for he certainly inspired our Celtic saints; as Rhigyfach tells us, David, Teilo and Aidan spent many years studying under him. The sixth century at Caerwyn brought to those people, listed by Professor E.G.Bowen, a spirituality which still inspires us today.

The family Quarterings of the Lloyd family, <sup>lxvii</sup> which Mrs Blandy kindly allowed me to copy, show a fairly comprehensive list of many of the early rulers in Britain which tend to be concentrated in Wales and the west generally, since the coming of the Saxons and later invaders. Saint Patrick's letter to Coroctocus or Ceredig the founder of Ceredigion would have been sent directly to Cunedda Wledig (his Welsh name also), who came down from the north, near Strathclyde, to support the British in Wales in the fifth century. Both St David and his cousin St Teilo were also descended from Cunedda Wledig. I first met Mrs Blandy when I was seven; she was a recognised breeder and judge of Welsh mountain ponies; 'Moonstone' was one of her breed on which I learned to ride, while staying with a schoolfriend near Dryslwyn. Mrs Blandy's family, and that of my school friend, once owned much of the land locally.

Professor Bowen writes: *History records the fact that by the year 378 Christianity was the official state religion of the Roman Empire.*

*The influence was not greatly felt in Wales, and here the real conversion did not come about until the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, that is during the so called 'Age of the Saints.'*

*These Saints and Missionary Monks, for example Dyfrig (Dubricius), Illtud, and later Samson, Paulinus (Paul Aurelian), Dewi (David), Teilo, Cadog, Deiniol and Cybi, once they had permission from the local rulers, set up monastic church settlements in various parts of Pagan Wales."*(and Brittany also) *They were known as 'Mother Churches' and used as a basis for* <sup>lxviii</sup> *founding smaller churches in the area..*

The temptation here is to dwell on this wonderful community now developing, sharing all things in common, and seeking to go into deep meditation on the things of God, to follow His Will, under the direction of that great teacher and man of prayer, Saint Paulinus, as they discovered more and more in the Scriptures. I will return now to Professor Bowen's writing, the two maps pp. 104 & 107<sup>lxix</sup> showing some of the places mentioned in the following text:

**A few people and places.**

Dywel ap Erbin, living at Ynys Dywel farm near Llansawel. Geli or Gellacus or Gelli, living at Cefn Rhos farm, Talley. Lupus,<sup>lxx</sup> bishop of Troyes, Blaidd Bleddyn near Talley. Cynur Farfwyn, father of quintuplets, the priest in charge of

Pumpsaint church at Cao living at Cynwil Cao. His sons - the five saints of Cao – Tyswg, *Tybie? Doethie, Cawl, Erchan.* (Tosoecus) (Baius) (Toethius). Cynog son of Brychan. Also Non (mother of St David) and her sister Wen (Woedocus). Gwyddog (his commemoration at Hirfaen Gwyddog – an

ancient monument 15ft high on Pantymaen farm, Llanycrwys). We can thus visualise the group of people mentioned here, both men and women who have such a wide age range, all studying the Scriptures together, and under such an important teacher,

Saint Paulinus. What a community of likeminded people, all earnestly seeking to understand God's Word. Four languages were spoken locally:

(a) the native Welsh, (b) Latin, (c) Gaelic, (d) Spanish.

Spanish came in with the Romans at Pumpsaint gold mines – Spaniards came from the Rio Tinto gold mines in Spain and it is not unreasonable to assume that the language was spoken locally. Gaelic of course was commonly spoken, because of the tremendous interchange of ideas and commerce between West Wales and Ireland.<sup>lxxi</sup>

*'Other discples of Paulinus were Dyrfal (Tigernomalus), Hercanus Lowenamus, Brydwen (Bretowennus a variation is Prydwen), also the name of 'King Arthur's ship'*

*It is interesting to consider that when Paulinus had his church at Maesllanurthwal, four languages were spoken locally. Gaelic of course was commonly spoken because of the tremendous interchange of ideas and commerce between West Wales and Ireland.*

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### **Paul Aurelian (Potolius).**

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So we now return to Canon Doble's confusion when he also discovered the next piece of writing referring to Paul Aurelian.

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On a retreat we attended on Bardsey Island off the coast of north Wales on 17.7.99, to hear a talk given by Brother Gildas on the *Rule of St Benedict*, he talked about monasticism in Wales which was unique and must have slowly evolved from that time, AD 150. He spoke about Coptic church documents, which came to light in Ireland, and about journeys to Coptic sites and later (from about 407) about small pockets of Coptic Christianity developing in Wales, known as ‘Island sites’, in fact monastic dwellings where monks lived in great simplicity and severity to be close to God. In Wales also, families formed tribal groups, who decided they wanted to become more Christian. He told us that there was a huge monastic site at Penally, where St Teilo was born, opposite Caldey Island just off that coast.

The highest form of this Celtic monasticism was when a monk or nun decided to set up on their own, as in St Govan’s Head, a chapel where an Irish monk lived in Pembrokeshire. This chapel can be seen from Caldey Island also.

Brother Gildas told us that *'Monasticism in Wales was unique and was founded in 150 AD, directly from the Apostolic tradition in Jerusalem – the uniqueness of the Christianity which developed here slowly evolved in Wales; in England Christianity came by late 500. However invasions, paganism, and other settlers swept through, until eventually they destroyed Welsh monasticism.*

*St David's teaching was something different; his last words to his flock were that it is the little things in life that matter – blessed are the broken, Jesus can use them, for example **Availability** – a whole life given up to God.'*

Jesus was the great exponent of this, for he gave us the example on the cross. I love the words he spoke to the man on the cross beside him, who asked for forgiveness; Jesus said *'Today, you will be with me in Paradise.'* The Cross shows us many things, but this was the summit of God's message to us; Jesus came to take all our failure into himself, so that we could be with him in Paradise – this is why he came – what a message from God, He wants us, He loves us, even after death and we have a destiny with Him. This little gathering at Caio were pointing the way for us, as they lived, seeking a closer walk with God as they, and thereby we, can also travel. This is what God wants.

Llandeilo has seen so many different scenes, that even those London prices in its old public houses today should no longer surprise us! Now that we understand some of the past in Llandeilo, from AD 70 when there were 2000 Roman troops encamped in Dynevor Park, we should not be worried at all about modern building developments spoiling our monastic city.

*'The beginning of the end for the Celtic church came when St Augustine came to Canterbury; no Welsh monasteries are recorded by him as existing; his discourteous lack of humility was shown to the Welsh bishops when Augustine received them by remaining seated, and later at the Synod of Whitby, demanded that their date for Easter should be changed.'*



*William the Conqueror came to St Davids in 1081, leading to the total annihilation of the Celtic church, when the Welsh Canon was demolished and Welsh people were totally denied their religious freedom, William and his wife encouraging new monastic orders. The Premonstratensians were founded at Talley and Cistercians took over at Whitland, monks bringing in the Rule of St Benedict for the first time. Welsh monasticism was destroyed, women being given a poor deal, leading to their subjugation within the church. At the same time it gave to women a way to transcend their femininity' - all this was said by Brother Gildas.*

Recently I discovered *The Lindisfarne Gospels*,<sup>lxxiii</sup> written by Janet Backhouse, who was an Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library, which owns the Lindisfarne Gospels. Imagine my disappointment when I enquired if I could talk to her, for she had written so much on her comparisons between the Lindisfarne Gospels and the Teilo Gospel Book. She said so much that I hoped she would say, that I would have loved to have met her, and had full discussion. However on enquiring at the Library I discovered that she had died in 2004.

The Lindisfarne Gospel's initial pages and 'Carpet Pages.'<sup>lxxiv</sup> I would like to go so far as to suggest that Aidan could have been the artist of some pages of the 'Lindisfarne Gospels', for instance there is a similarity to the 'Cross Carpet pages' in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Could they have been initiated by St Aidan, either at Iona under St Cuthbert, before Aidan was sent to Lindisfarne, or even at Lindisfarne by Aidan himself?

In the portrait of St Luke, the **calf or ox** representing the sacrifice of the crucifixion are similar – almost identical, except that the animal has acquired wings in the Lindisfarne Book, and the lion looks much more realistic in the Lindisfarne edition; the **figures of the Apostles** however are in quite a different style. St Paulinus's Apostle, carries much symbolism. But to return to Paulinus the Scribe once more, I will continue to quote (in italics) from Professor E.G.Bowen's notes to me:

*It was also this Paulinus who wrote the Gospel Book, whereby it comes as no surprise that his eyesight suffered from such work.*

### THE GOSPEL BOOK

1) *Paulinus wrote the Book complete: – the Four Gospels, and Carpet pages, and illustrations.*

2) *Paulinus trained in Rome under the Pope and afterwards under Saint Germanus at Auxerre, who brought him back home to Wales.*

3) *Dewi (David), Teilo and Aidan studied under Paulinus for many years at Maesllanurthwal.*

4) The Mother church at Caio. *Here the five saints were born, their father being a priest at Pumpsaint.*

5) Marginalia. *Cingal bought the Book in exchange for his best horse, and gave it to Llandeilo Fawr, where it remained on the Altar until the time of Hywel Dda. The Marginalia are written in the oldest Welsh we now retain, and refer to farms and parcels of land in the surrounding district, given to the church of Llandeilo Fawr.*

6) Aidan *returned to Ireland and copied a MS Book which came from Rome. He was punished for this and sent to Iona. Here he stayed until Northumberland needed a Christian missionary and Aidan was sent. He founded Lindisfarne “Holy Island.”*

7) *It was part of a monk’s training to copy his own personal Bible; he would carry it strapped to his back, as he journeyed around the countryside. However the Gospel Book, made by the distinguished Scribe Paulinus at his brother’s monastery at Maesllanurthwal near Caio, was a rare copy. It is illustrated, very precious, and now kept in Lichfield Cathedral.*

**It now seems to me obvious that if Paulinus was clearly living in the Sixth Century, and if he was the Scribe who created this Gospel Book, then the Book itself must be Sixth Century also.**

I repeat:-

Paulinus was the common name for other learned saints; thus Paul Aurelian must not be confused with that other Paulinus, who also lived near Llandoverly but a few miles west, at Maes Llanurthwal, the monastery of his brother Urthwal. Paulinus the scribe was a native of the Dolaucothi area and, after his ordination as a priest, he was sent to the Pope, in Rome, for further training. At a later date he was sent to Germanus in Auxerre, to become known as 'Paulinus the Scribe'. He returned to his native country, with Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes, and a number of others, mainly to put down the Pelagian heresy in 447 AD. It may be that he founded Whitland Abbey, but certainly he returned to his native area near Caio, known as Cao by some of us, to the gold mines and to his brother Urthwal's monastery at Crug y bar, <sup>lxxv</sup> not far from Caio, to the west of Llandoverly.

**To return now to Professor Bowen:-**'*He*' (Paulinus the Scribe) '*must have played a most important part in the monastic movement in Wales. Rhigyfach was the eldest son of Sulien who taught King Alfred, including Latin. Sulien was Bishop of St David's from 1072-3, and from 1080-1085. Rhigyfach's father and brothers were all celebrated for their learning, and they were all writing in the Twelfth century. Rhigyfach's life of St David introduces Paulinus twice. Naturally, being based at St Davids, the family were aware of the greatness of St David himself, and their promotion of the saint at King Alfred's court meant that he was at least noticed by the English court from an early period.*'

**Firstly then,** *after his ordination, David goes to Paulinus the Scribe (a disciple of St Germanus the bishop of Auxerre). It was Paulinus who taught St David the three parts of reading until he was a scribe, St David tarrying there many years, reading and fulfilling what he read.*

*Secondly, Rhigyfach tells how David worked a miracle, when Paulinus became blind by reason of the intense pain in his eyes, and St David restored his sight by touching them. Paulinus blessed the holy David with all the blessings that are written in both Old and New Testaments.*

With reference to Rhygyfach no 6) above:- Aidan is mentioned here as being interested in copying a MS Book, but particularly in this context he was punished for it and sent to Iona under Cuthbert.

Aidan's extended stay with St Paulinus may have been simply because St Paulinus realised that Aidan was a promising pupil not only for deep study of the Scriptures, but also that he was an artist and needed extended teaching in such training too.

The Cross Carpet pages, and also initial pages in the 'Gospels of St Teilo' or 'Lichfield Gospels' are uncannily similar.

However the 'Gospels of Teilo' is executed in soft colours which are so endearing, and especially the figure of St Luke, communicating spirituality beyond words – one only has to look into the face of the artist's picture of St Luke, to feel quite another dimension. His eyes seem to be so deep, they speak of heaven. The **Coptic symbols** in the Chad Gospels speak of a Mediterranean influence, not found in the Gospels of Lindisfarne.

One cannot leave this subject without mention of the decorated **Initial pages** which are striking, for instance in a comparison <sup>lxxvi</sup> between the Llandeilo Gospels ('St Chad'), Janet Backhouse gives us such a clear and interesting rendering in her book, where she comments on the similarities between the two Gospel Books, which is very helpful.

Not only Janet Backhouse, but Canon Doble also gives us a vision of the closeness and mutual support of these early Christian saints, stating that Teilo too, *'having heard of the fame of a certain wise man named Paulinus, went to him and abode with him for some time, so that, whatever secrets of the*

*Scriptures were previously hidden from them, they were now able to study together and understand. And there he became an associate of St David, a man of the most perfect life.'*

We can now understand where the original Book of Teilo, now in Lichfield Cathedral, was written and who wrote it. *'Paulinus the Scribe was a great and holy man.'* Canon Doble continues:-

*'A disciple of the holy Bishop in Rome and of Saint Germanus, Paulinus was sent to him as a youth after his ordination to the priesthood. David cured the intense pain and blindness in his eyes when St Paulinus was elderly, by touching him. David also learnt from Paulinus how to be a scribe on an island, most likely 'Ynis' being the description of a monastery now extant at Maes LlanUrthwal (Paulinus's brother Urthwal's monastery near Caio and the gold mines). It was here that Paulinus was born, and here that the Paulinus stone stood to mark his burial place (now in the museum at Abergwili). We understand that this same Paulinus returned to Britain with Germanus and remained in Wales, his homeland. It was also this Paulinus, who wrote the Gospel Book, whereby it comes as no surprise that his eyesight suffered from such work.'*

Aidan stayed on with Paulinus the Scribe after Teilo and David had left. Aidan was obviously younger than they were, but also it may have been that Paulinus realised Aidan's gift as an artist, a promising pupil not only for deep study of the Scriptures, but one who needed extended teaching in that skill also.

The memory of all this comes flooding back to me nearly thirty fascinating years later, as I try to concentrate on what I was

researching in 1981. <sup>lxxvii</sup> I became a Reader in the Church of England in 1992 and, after retiring from the Prison Service, my husband, Adrian, has been busy with Interfaith, while we have both been writing, he as an erstwhile officer in the Indian Army during that last world war and the Pakistan Army thereafter, whereby so sadly that most interesting multifaith sub-continent was lost as an exemplar to us all, while I am catching up with my Welsh background. Also now we have eight grandchildren between us. Unfortunately I am having to undergo foot operations just now, which make it difficult to get to our usual church two miles up the hill, so that we joined a church with a Saxon name just over the bridge from our flat, with the intention of getting a little nearer to understanding the Saxon period, since our church,

Holy Trinity Roehampton, had asked me to write about Queen Bertha's Christian influence in England. I was already writing on the Welsh Christian history, but, since Queen Bertha's school was evacuated to Wales during the war to where I lived in Llandeilo, it seemed sensible to join these two research projects together, which is what I am now endeavouring to do!

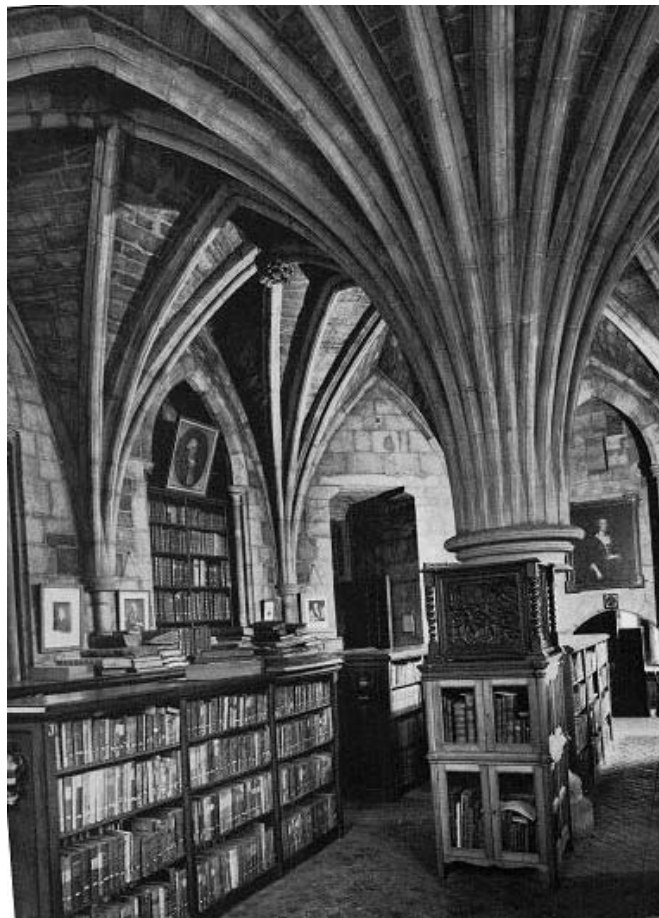
This thirty year gap means that scholars have completed further work on the Marginalia, so that I include here what they believed when I dropped my work in 1981, albeit sadly it is out of date. I too have moved on and my conclusions now differ also, but I offer them here in the hope that scholars will consider them. (It is now 2012 and I still have two more foot operations to face, which is holding up my writing).

The first person I visited was **Prebendary Hill the Librarian in the 1980s in Lichfield Cathedral**, when I was exploring the material for my book on St Teilo. I took a picture of the long library table, which includes the special box from which he took the Bible. We explored the Gospel Book together. Whilst sitting at the table, he turned the pages to show me various important points of interest.

We have records in the margins of the Gospels of Teilo/Lichfield, in the earliest known written Welsh of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, showing some of the transaction deeds of parcels of land in the Llandeilo area to and from the monastery, which can still be identified today. Those Gospels remained at Llandeilo until the time of Bishop Nobis as Abbot/Bishop in Llandeilo in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century, when there was an active cult of Teilo, because the final Llandeilo entries date from that time and in Nobis's name. The Welsh believe that the Book is Welsh. We also know that it is even earlier than the Book of Kells from the mid - 8<sup>th</sup> century, and the 7<sup>th</sup> century Lindisfarne Gospels.

The Gospels are not complete, ending at **St Luke chapter 3 verse 9**. Either they were never finished, which seems unlikely, or the rest of the Gospels were lost or destroyed (in some raid?); Mercia and Wales were sworn enemies. What seems more likely however is that they disappeared during the Civil War, for two books were originally recorded at Lichfield. The Duchess of Somerset, daughter of the Earl of Essex (Elizabeth 1's favourite), had them in safe keeping during the Civil War, but only one was returned, for which she had a special box made in which to keep it (see Library picture).

I have the writings of the then known possible provenance of the Marginalia, given to me by the experts of that time;<sup>lxxviii</sup> let us concentrate on the Gospel Book itself.. This box sits on top of the bookcase which we see in the centre of the picture in front of the pillar.



The Lichfield Cathedral Library and the box in which the Gospel Book was housed.

## **The Gospel Book of St Teilo.**

Today Celtic traditions in these islands of Britain are becoming better understood, particularly in recent years because of work by the Iona community. Ireland has for long been known for its missionary and monastic work, and also its manuscripts. Lindisfarne and the north of England are known especially for the illustrated Gospel Books, but the significance of Wales in the Celtic tradition has been far from fully explored. There is only one Gospel Book today, but the truth is we know not what we have lost through war, invasions and plunder.

Let us focus for a moment on that Gospel Book, known to have connections with Wales, 'The Gospel Book of St Teilo', which stood on the altar of Llandeilo Fawr 1200 years ago, now known as 'The Gospels of St Chad' or 'The Lichfield Gospels': Lichfield even claim that it probably originated from their area, although the first mention of Lichfield is in the margins by Wynsi, Bishop of Lichfield from 974-992.

The colouring is softer and more delicate than the Book of Kells, whilst some of the designs also show Egyptian/Coptic influence; the art work shows elaborate Celtic designs, including magnificent Cross-carpet pages introducing each Gospel of intertwining birds and many other superb examples of Celtic art similar to the Lindisfarne Gospels.

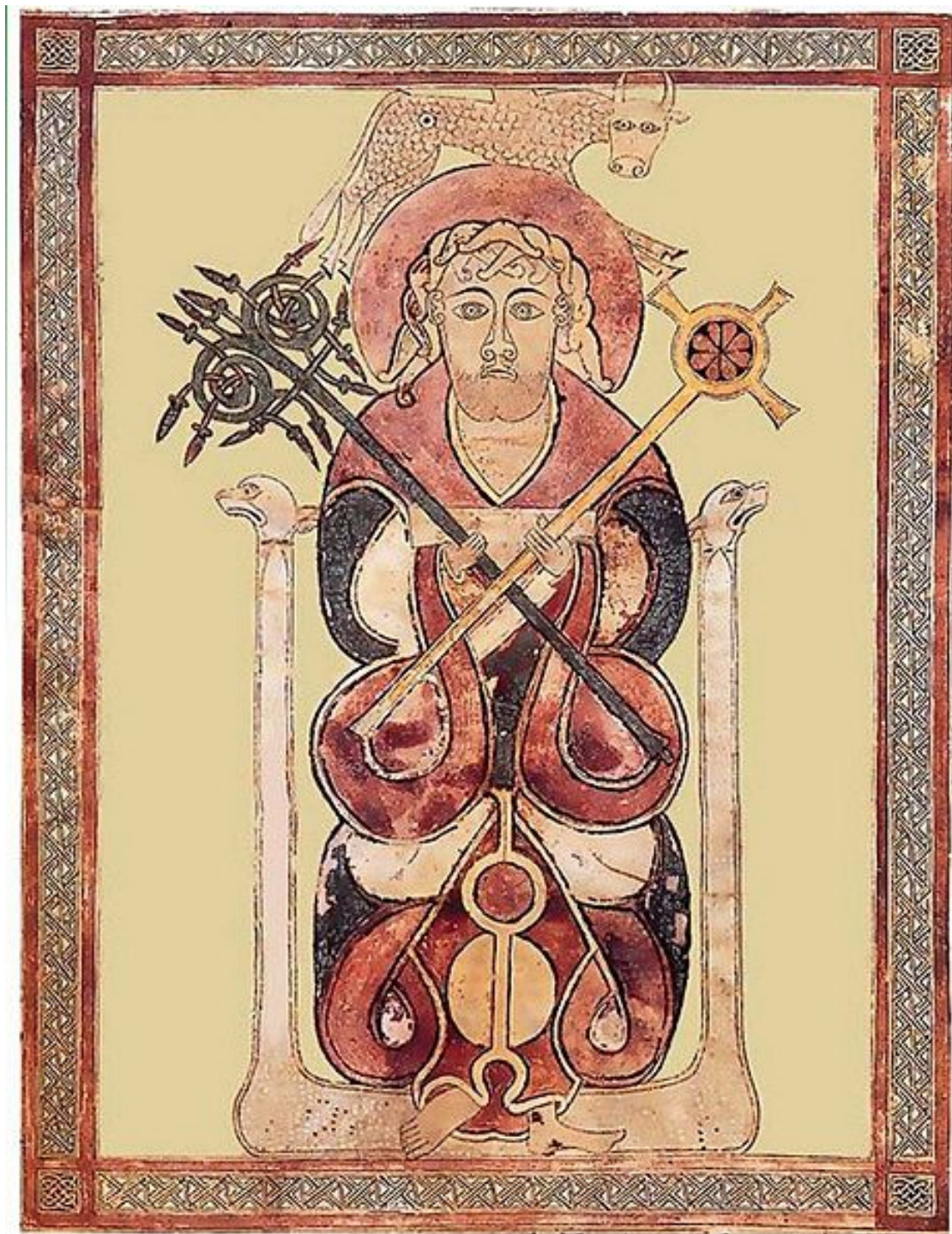
This Gospel Book is a magnificent example of a priceless collection, created in order to lie on the altar of an important church, when Llandeilo monastery, which had considerably expanded in Teilo's time, had become a powerful landowner even by 720. We have records in the margins of the Gospels of Teilo/Lichfield, in the earliest known written Welsh of the 6th century, showing some of the transaction deeds of parcels of land in the Llandeilo area given to the monastery, which can still be identified today. We know that it remained at Llandeilo until the time of Bishop Nobis as Abbot/Bishop in Llandeilo in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century, when there was an active cult of Teilo, because the final Llandeilo entries date from that time and in Nobis's name as Abbot/Bishop in Llandeilo in the final Llandeilo entries. The Welsh believe that the Book is Welsh. Maybe we shall never



know the truth; we only know that it is even earlier the Book of Kells (in the mid – 8<sup>th</sup> century), or the Lindisfarne Gospels 7<sup>th</sup> century, whilst the art work includes elaborate Celtic designs, and others of Mediterranean Coptic and Byzantine origin, especially around the borders and, more generally, in the concept of the artistry. Again the page depicting St Luke with his crossed staff is very similar to Egyptian design. The colours used by the artist need to be seen; they are much more gentle than the Book of Kells, soft reds and pink, light blue, indigo, purple and ultramarine, gold, primrose yellow and white. The art work shows elaborate Celtic designs, including a magnificent carpet page of intertwining birds and many other superb examples of Celtic art. The artist shows his wide knowledge of the East, but his mixing of paint has not endured and has flaked badly. It can certainly be confusing, because of course so many people were involved in this period, giving their lives for Christ and for Wales. However it is an eye-opener for those who know little about all that happened in Wales from c400-600 CE. To add to the confusion of the times, there were some Desert Fathers also fleeing from persecutions in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century and arriving on the coasts of Britain and Ireland, even before the time of St Patrick.

The colours of the Lindisfarne Gospels would probably reflect the colours of the local dyes, and perhaps were from vegetables and minerals on the island itself, both from sea and the land, which is cut off from the mainland twice every day.

After Teilo's death we have records of the development of the monastery at Llandeilo Fawr in the margins of the Lichfield Gospels, in the earliest known written Welsh. This Gospel Book is a magnificent example of a priceless collection, created in order to lie on the altar of an important church. Llandeilo monastery, which considerably expanded in Teilo's time, had become a powerful landowner even by 720, when a great king ruled in Dyfed, Cathen, who gave his name to Catheiniog and who ruled not only Dyfed but Brycheiniog as well, indeed as far as Hereford.



Paulinus was trained by the Pope in Rome, <sup>lxxix</sup> and afterwards by St Germanus in Auxerre, returning to his homeland with Germanus the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century. St Martin's contribution was as a monk; he founded this precious monastic movement, which we will see was the foundation of the faith of Queen Bertha, although St Augustine enfolded the church in England in the Roman clerical tradition of his day.

One must not forget that during Paulinus's extended training in Rome he was also in the centre of cultivated life, the Coptic Church being amongst the earliest to produce Art.<sup>lxxx</sup> One knows of the early Coptic influence in Wales and particularly the Monastic influence there, and in Ireland especially, which can be witnessed in the Gospel Book. Old Paulinus, as an artist himself, would have taken the opportunity to explore all the Mediterranean sites he could, whilst in Rome.

I quote Professor Bowen again:

*According to tradition, Paulinus had twelve disciples at Maesllanwrthwal and they each in due course established their own monastic settlements, spreading Christianity further afield.*

*In the Crugybar–Pumpsaint area there are many farms called 'YNIS', which is Welsh for 'Island..' Ynis was in fact the old name for a monastic settlement – an island of Christianity in a pagan sea – Wales itself also at that time. (Later, at the dissolution of the monasteries Talley Premonstatensian Abbey suffered the same fate). But in the sixth century in South Wales the six most famous of these monastic settlements or 'Mother Churches' were Saint David's (Pembrokeshire), Llanbadarn Fawr, Llandeilo Fawr, Llan Illtud Fawr, Llancarfan and Llandaff. The early monasteries in Wales became the active centres of education for the spreading of Christianity – a prime example being the monastic school at Llandeilo Fawr, St Teilo's foundation of course.*

*Old Paulinus's monastery would have had a scriptorium, for Paulinus was a scribe and studied under the Pope both in Rome and at Germanus's monastery in Auxerre. It is believed that in his monastery near Llandeilo, it was he who wrote the Gospel Book, which came to lie on that altar at Llandeilo Fawr, ten miles away.*

### **The Marginalia.**

In 1981 the suggestion was that the first note in the margin was copied perhaps from older sources, written in Welsh; several of the last marginalia are in the time of Bishop Nobis, who was to take over for thirty-three years at Llandeilo Fawr from 840-873, but the final name is that of Bishop Wynsi (974-992), in Lichfield. However I think that it is now clear that Gehli and others were

Paulinus's contemporaries. It would take too long to go into all that was being considered thirty years ago. I have so much here written to me at that time by so many experts, whom I can but enumerate in the endnotes.

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Paulinus the Scribe, whose eye trouble and blindness St David cured, was a native of the Dolaucothi area. His work was as a teacher and, as the author of the Gospel Book, he would have had a scriptorium in the monastery at Maes Llanurthwal, his brother's monastery. We read that *David, Teilo and Aidan all spent a very long time studying there.*

Paulinus was an old man at the time of the Synod of Llandewi Brefi in 545, for we know that he had been healed of his blindness by St David on his way to the Synod. It is probable that the Gospel Book he had created was nearly finished at this time, and had in fact strained his eyes. However he was deeply upset by his blindness and possibly was on the finishing stages of his work on the Book. It seems reasonable to suppose that his time at Maesllanurthwal was coming to an end, and his burial stone, which we have with its inscription thereon, dates from this time also of course. The more formal Latin inscription may have been instigated by Bishop Lupus of Troyes, who lived in Cao at this time and is commemorated as having a house there which I mark on the map. Cefn-blaidd is near Talley on the O.S. Map, which Mr Cyril Jones the historian living in Carmarthen kindly sent to me, and you will find it on the bottom/left corner of page 106. We may imagine the funeral service was attended by all Paulinus's students and friends, and taken by Bishop Lupus perhaps; it must have been deeply moving there in Cao, in the shadow of the Gold mine in that beautiful countryside. Paulinus the Scribe must have come from noble stock.

### *Saint Paulinus*

*There is reason to believe that Saint Paulinus established his religious settlement or monastery on Maes-Llan-Urthwal farm, near Crugybar. Indeed his grave is on that farm where he was born, and Maes Llanurthwal was Pant-y-Polion – a variant of 'Pant-y-Paulion,' the glen of the followers of Paulinus. The inscription on the gravestone (now in Abergwili Museum) is in*

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*classical form by two Roman bards – OVID (Ofydd) and LUNCAN (Lucanus), probably LUCAN?*

*SERVATUR FIDAU*

*PATRIQUE SEMPER AMATOR*

*HIC PAULINUS IACIT*

*CULTOR PIENTISSIMUS AEQUI*

*Paulinus's Epitaph. English Translation* \_\_\_\_\_ *Welsh* Servant of  
the Faith *Gwas y ffydd* And always a lover of his country,  
*charwr ei wlad yn wastadol* Here lies Paulinus. *Yn y*  
*gorwedd Peulin*

Cultivator of Highest Justice.

*Gwrteithydd y cyfiawnder uchaf.*<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

<sup>lxxxiv</sup>

For more information on the Paulinus stone – please refer to  
'Early Christian Monuments of Wales', by Dr E. Nash Williams

**Cross Carpet pages from the Gospel Book of Teilo.**





### A spiritual icon

The artistic extravagance of the Llandeleo Gospel Book makes it much more than simply a text to be read aloud in church. Its decorated pages express the scribe's adoration of Christ, and also proclaim Christ's glory to anyone reading the book.

It is an icon: an invitation to the beholder to enter the sacred space of prayer and meditation where eternal truths are to be found. Each of the Gospels was originally prefaced by a highly decorated 'carpet page', recalling the prayer mats used in the Middle East - and maybe in Britain - at this time, intended to extend just such an invitation. Time has faded the colours of the decorated pages, but the artist anyway used a rather muted palette - mainly purples, blues, yellows and white. Perhaps these colours carried symbolic meaning, for the Saxon monk Bede equated the shades of purple and white with the aspirations of the soul.

The Brethren of the Common Life, who ran prolific scriptoria in medieval Germany and the Netherlands, offered this advice to the scribe:

*"Concerning the work of copying, note that you should order the work of your hands to the end that it may lead you to purity of heart, because you are weak and cannot be always at spiritual exercises and for this reason was handiwork instituted. Wherefore you ought to attend in your copying to three things, to wit, that you make the letters properly and perfectly, that you copy without error, that you understand the sense of what you are copying, and that you concentrate your wandering mind on the task."*

### Eicon ysbrydol

**A**m fod Llyfr Tello mor gain a chywrair roedd yn hwy na dim ond testun i'w ddarllen ar goedd yn yr eglwys. Mae'r addurn ar y tudalennau yn mynegi cariad a pharch y mynach at Grist ac mae hefyd yn cyflwynu gogoniant Crist i'r darllenwyr.

Eicon ydyw: gwahoddiad i'r sawl â'i gwelai fynd i mewn i'r man cysegredig hwnnw lle mae'r gwirionedd tragwyddol a chael cyfle i weddio a myfyrio. Ar un adeg roedd tudalen 'garped' gywrair iawn o flaen pob un o'r Eflengylau, tebyg i'r matiau gweddol a ddefnyddir yn y Dwyrain Canol - ac efallai yn Mhrydain - bryd hynny ac a estynnai'r un math o wahoddiad i fyfyrwyr.

Mae lliwiau'r tudalennau cain wedi pylu gyda throad y rhod, ond lliwiau pwl a ddefnyddiodd yr arlunydd beth bynnag - porffor, glas, melyn a gwyn yn bennaf. Efallai bod ystyr symbolaidd i'r lliwiau hyn oherwydd roedd Bede, y mynach Sacsonaidd, yn ystyried porffor a gwyn yn gyfystyr â dyheadau'r enaid.

Dyma gyngor Brodyr y Bywyd Cyffredin i'r copïwr:

*"O ran y dasg o gopïo, cofiwch y dylech drefnu gwaith eich dwylo fel ei fod yn eich arwain at burdeb calon, oherwydd rydych yn wan ac ni allwch fod wrth eich ymarferion ysbrydol bob amser. Dyna pam y trefnwyd gwaith llaw i chi. Wrth gopïo dylech datu sylw i dri pheth, sef eich bod yn ffurfio'r llythrennau'n gywir a pherffailth, eich bod yn copïo heb wall, eich bod yn deall ystyr yr hyn a gopïwch a'ch bod yn rhoi eich meddwl yn llwyr ar y dasg gerbron."*

*Bis cum suis  
usque adde*

The Llandeleo Gospels • Llyfr Eflengylau Tello

The Marginalia were written in Welsh, several of the last few notes being in the time of Bishop Nobis, who was to take over for thirty-three years at Llandeleo Fawr from 840-873, but the final name is that of Bishop Wynsi (974-992) in Lichfield. In other words it was on the altar at Llandeleo Fawr in 873 and found its way to Lichfield sometime during Bishop Wynsi's period at Lichfield.

I have since read Professor E.G. Bowen's papers, which he left to me shortly before his death with a collection of correspondence here, and will include the list of learned people. However Dr B.S.S. Benediks, the then Sub Librarian (Special Collections) at the University of Birmingham, sent me 9 points, which sum up a seminar held at Lichfield in July 1976, when 17 mediaevalists gathered to try to form conclusions; Dr Benediks wrote this to me on 18<sup>th</sup> December 1981.

Meanwhile Professor Bowen had contacted me in October 1981, after I had written to him, and this began a very fruitful correspondence with several meetings which were very important to me, until he sadly died in 1983 and I was devastated. The memory of all this comes flooding back to me as I write now,

nearly thirty years later. He told me that there was a Bank Manager living near Cao, who had completed research on the Gospel Book, the significance of which I now understand and will set down here .  
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**The Gospels are not complete, ending at St Luke chapter 3 verse 9.**

Two books were recorded at Lichfield during the Civil War, one alone was returned afterwards.

**Professor E.G.Bowen's sudden death in 1983.**

Professor Bowen's departure was a terrible blow for me, and for some years I put his papers away, not recognising their significance. However I am now able to see what he was trying to tell me, and to pass it on, together with what Mrs Blandy also wrote down for me before she departed from us. Miss Enid Morgan of Albert Mount, Cao, who gave me a much wider understanding of her area also, but had lived in London and worked there during the war; until she then inherited her family home, becoming able to read her many books and to develop her local understanding there as an historian on retirement; she was a fund of local knowledge, so that I came to see how the church at Cao so close to the gold mines had from the beginning a large tower with access well clear of ground level. The rumour was that originally the tower could provide a safe haven in the event of danger. Another rumour reached me about the way that the Romans buried the bodies of many slaves who died in the gold mine or were working on the seven mile hypocaust; they would be thrown into the marshy ground or moat around the tower and covered with lime to destroy their bodies. However I am not aware of any excavations done in this area, so that I cannot substantiate any of this. But still the references which we read in Professor Bowen's papers do show just how many Roman troops were engaged in work and defence of this area after their conquest of the Druidical gold mine there. The British Royal family still today use this gold in our Queen's wedding ring.

I myself was thrown into my husband's world, driving him to inspect prisons from the Isle of Wight to Norwich, along with meetings upon meetings, feeling very privileged to be part of that



scene. We both had three children, the two youngest of whom were aged eighteen, and in their second year sixth form. Now there are also eight grandchildren.

In my earlier days, I had finished my three year training as a nurse at the Middlesex Hospital in London, but declined to take SRN, much to Matron's disappointment, for she claimed I was one of her best nurses, but I felt I was just not cut out for it; I wanted to help people, but there was very little opportunity for young girls in 1950. I would for example have jumped at professional work in the church. However I first married the President of World Croquet of the Guinness Book of Records; I had a wonderful life for nearly twenty years, until we sadly parted. So I brought up my three sons of 15, 13, and 5 on my own, whilst studying for a degree with the Open University for six years for my B.A., and then joining the Victorian Society to become a Lecturer for ILEA until it folded. Then, seeing my opportunity to write my book on Dryslwyn Castle, I discovered that Wales had its own history, completely different from that of England, and became hooked! Now I needed more time to write, whereby my book on 'Beloved Valley' appeared, and I decided that I needed further academic training, joining Swansea University for an M.Phil, which I obtained in 2003. Meanwhile I had also trained for three years as a Reader in the Church during those early 1990s. At the moment I serve in a limited way at Holy Trinity, Roehampton, (now led by my second husband's son-in-law and daughter), but I have just had three foot operations, which has meant that, much later than I intended, I am writing this at last.

Holy Trinity asked me to write this – they wanted to know the Christian story in Wales and England in Anglo-Saxon times. So at last I have the chance to get back to Professor Bowen's papers, thirty years later!

However – now that I have read these papers and I look at the picture (where I also sat in the library at Lichfield Cathedral with Prebendary Hill), I am overcome by the fact that I find that Dewi, Teilo and Aidan and all those others were there at its making; I am not only shocked but almost speechless. Perhaps *they* even touched this Book which I now study ... I have been unable to continue for several weeks.

However when we did join St Etheldreda's church just over Putney bridge from our flat, with the intention of learning more about Queen Bertha's legacy, I could not drive for some time. On the first morning, a man came up to me, after having met my husband Adrian Arnold and said "I am the Attorney General, and I must have all Adrian's prison papers." So that was the priority for the whole of last year and now I turn my attention to the Gospel Book with only a few months to finish it.

It is clear that both Gelli or Gelhi, and also Cingal were contemporaries of the Scribe, Saint Paulinus, but, although we know where he was born and also where he died, we do not have the date; however he was clearly an old man at the **Synod of Llandewi Brevi, AD 545**, which would mean that he was at least a generation older than David and Teilo, and Aidan.

In AD547 many of the Welsh population fled to Brittany for some 'seven years and seven months', until the infection abated,<sup>lxxxviii</sup> whereby records could not be kept in the ensuing chaos.

Scholars now say that the Yellow plague was just one factor amongst many others which caused the Welsh to emigrate to Brittany, while probably the advancing territorial aggression of the Anglo-Saxons was the major factor. Brittany had proved a safe haven since around 410, when Vortigern invited the Saxons to help him defend the country. He gave them the Isle of Thanet, thus the invasions on the east coast of Britain began in earnest, when his parents Queen Elen and Magnus Maximus (now as Emperor) travelled to Rome at the end of the fourth century, taking the army with them. Further, although Vortigern had a British wife, he married Rowena the daughter of Hengist, which did not endear him to the native British.

However, after the assassination of her husband Magnus Maximus, Queen Elen fled back home with her children; leaving her brother Emyr Llydaw in Brittany with a contingent of Welsh people, however Queen Elen and her sons returned to Wales.

But our ties with Brittany remain strong even today, as we were to discover when we travelled there to research the history; we were so fortunate as to meet the Vicar of Llandeleau in the south west of Brittany; he gave us much help. He was interested in what we

were doing, so that we stayed with Monsieur L'Abbe le Grand there, at Pleyber-Christ, Cote de Morlaix, Landeleau, in Brittany, where the Legend of St Teilo is still very much alive - they celebrate an annual event, commemorating him. We stayed in his Vicarage several times and he kindly showed us where St Teilo is commemorated, even having the good fortune to be staying there at the time of his celebration; now Monsieur L'Abbe le Grand has been moved to the north, to St Pol-de-Leon and we have lost touch recently. However we did manage to take him to Llandeilo Fawr, when we had our cottage there, and he was able to play the organ in our church and briefly tour around.

Before he died in 1983, Professor Bowen gave to me the names of some of Paulinus the Scribe's followers at Maesllanurthwal, and it seems to have fallen to me now to explain who these people were and what they were doing in this place.

Mrs Blandy<sup>lxxxix</sup> confirmed that this Saint Paulinus the Scribe<sup>xc</sup> built and used the church of St Paulinus in Ystradffin<sup>th</sup>, which was reopened on Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup> 1984 by the Lord Bishop of St David's, the Right Reverend George Noakes. Our Gospel Book which was placed on the altar at Llandeilo Fawr was indeed written locally by this same Paulinus the Scribe, Mrs Blandy explained; she also told me that Nennius wrote how the Gospel<sup>xcii</sup> Book reached Lichfield<sup>xciii</sup>. The family Quarterings of the Lloyd<sup>xciv</sup> family, which Mrs Blandy kindly allowed me to copy, show a fairly comprehensive list of many of the early rulers in Britain; this belongs to the family of Cunedda Wledig who came from northern Britain in the time of St Patrick, to support the Welsh against incursions on their western shores, concentrating in Wales and the West generally with the coming of the Saxons and later invaders. Saint Patrick's letter to Coroctocus<sup>xciii</sup> or Ceredig<sup>xciv</sup>, the founder of Ceredigion, would have been sent directly to the family of Cunedda Wledig (his Welsh name), who came down from the North, near Strathclyde, to support the British in Wales in the fifth century. Since my sister and I spent much time at school in Tregyb House, Ffairfach, Llandeilo, during the war, having been evacuated with our kindergarten school, Parc Wern in

Swansea, to Dolaucothi House near the gold mines, I have known the area all my life quite intimately, and love it very much for its beauty and now for its history as well. Mrs Blandy became a great help from her vast fund of knowledge; she had spent much time with Professor Eyre Evans, the archaeologist in the area during the 1920s, and she told me all she knew, whereby we became firm friends. Mrs Blandy further told me that Paulinus the Scribe was the author of the Llandeilo Gospel Book, but of course I was slow to understand what Professor Bowen was also telling me, when he gave me all his research on that subject before his sudden death also in 1983. At last however, I am now able to see what he was hoping to tell me, and to pass it on, together with all that Mrs Blandy showed me, before she also departed from us.<sup>xcv</sup> I have not yet mentioned another dear friend, almost a Welsh cousin, an old lady, Miss Enid Morgan, who lived in a house called Albert Mount at Caeo (Caio). She was a cousin of a cousin-in-law of mine, Lloyd Lewis. Enid Morgan was a local historian, and we became firm friends until her death, shortly before that of Mrs Blandy, with whom I began this chapter. We talked endlessly about the area, books and history; I remain very privileged to have known both these two ladies. They were enlightenment itself for me over this vast history.<sup>xcvi</sup>

Eusebius has given us his account of the history of the early church for its first three hundred years; this is the only surviving account of the Roman church's history, being Eusebius's belief in God's guidance, as I have come to understand it whilst writing this; he felt that God was working His purpose out throughout history, and it seems to me that God was still doing so in the period I have been considering here.

The Welsh have not given us precise dates on the whole, because Wales was originally an oral society<sup>xcvii</sup>, while later also so much was destroyed in Wales by invasions; however the English gained a Roman Church background, whereby, after the earlier devastation and purges of the Church by Nero and others, including the barbarians, they learned the importance of retaining the background written records of their Church on the whole, (although the barbarian invasion in Magnus Maximus's reign may

have destroyed some earlier documents, for instance that Caractacus's son Linus was the second 'Bishop of Rome' and Welsh). However bishops were not their official title in that period of church history, Linus like Peter both dying as martyrs, and buried together in the Vatican.

We later hear of them in Rhigyfach's 'Life of St David', written in the twelfth century in Latin, which also mentions that David and Teilo were studying together with Aidan under 'Paulinus the Scribe' at Maes Llanurthwal near the gold mines (see the end Chapter).

Professor Bowen writes:- (I quote in italics again)

St David or Dewi Sant '*The St David of History Dewi Sant: our Founder Saint*' was the title of Professor Bowen's address which he gave to the Cathedral in 1981, on the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the celebration and re-building of the present cathedral. He tells us that St David's father King Sant was of the family of Cunedda, whilst his mother Non, came from Brychan's family, like his cousin Teilo who was born at Penally near Tenby. David and Teilo worked closely together in south Wales.

Professor Emeritus E.G.Bowen gave me a copy of his address to the cathedral. He tells us that almost all we know about St David today is to be found in Rhigyfach. His cult in Wessex must be attributed to the tutor and author of the '*Life of King Alfred*' by Asser himself in the Twelfth century.

Another point of interest was a stone, found in 1698, in the small church at Llandewi Brevi, where St David was proclaimed Archbishop of Wales. The stone had an important inscription which was hidden by builders, who were repairing the church and who apparently used it for building; it has never been found since.

Another reference is in the poem 'Armes Prydein vawr' (the prophecy of Britain), which is pre-Rhigyfach, found in the Book of Taliesin, Professor Bowen states; this poem reports an agreement between the Welsh, the Irish, the Danes of Dublin and the men of Cornwall, Brittany and Strathclyde to unite against the English oppressor. The Poet seeks to rally them all under the banner of Dewi, and foretells their ultimate victory. This poem

clearly represents Dewi as a soldier-saint. It was written in King Athelstan's time, in south-east Wales.

St David, or Dewi Sant, is well known and much has been written about our Patron Saint, who was working at the same time as Saint Teilo, who of course we remember took over the mantle of Dubricius, when he retired to Bardsey Island as leader in charge of organising the Welsh Celtic church. Churches in Ireland used wood, whereas in Wales these early foundations were simply wattle and daub and, within a compound usually circular, the small huts also including a larger one for worship. Llandeilo, or Teilo's church, was built on a hill in the middle of that Beloved Valley, high above the river Towy.

Our saint's 'Lives' contain stories of native opposition to them in the form of local pagans. In his extract from St David's 'Life' by Rhigyfach we see how Irish pirates, who landed on the coastline around the west coasts of Britain, could cause harassment to the indigenous population, yet Teilo was helping David build his monastery at a strategic place on the coast of Pembrokeshire. There is a grisly tale of the local chief, Boia, who had his settlement at Clegyr Boia close by. His wife took violent objection to David's monastery and sent her maidens to bathe naked in a nearby lake to tantalise his monks, who were shocked by such suggestive behaviour and begged David to leave the place. He however stood his ground. Boia's wife then sat down and, taking her step-daughter, laid the girl's head on her lap, pretending to show her affection by combing her hair, but, in pagan Druidical fashion instead taking out a knife to slit the girl's throat and cutting off her head. *'She seemed to have been seized by some demonic possession and then fled, her stepdaughter having been duly sacrificed to her pagan gods'*. Boia, himself a Druid as well as a chieftain, decided in his anger and distress to attack David's camp. By a strange coincidence however, that very night, another Irish raider named Liski invaded Boia's camp, cut off his head and burnt the camp to the ground. Irish raiders were a constant threat to the coasts of Cardigan and Pembrokeshire. St David's was well-placed to give hospitality to all travellers by sea from the Mediterranean, Spain and Brittany and between Ireland and the continent also travellers of all kinds, indeed not only traders but

pilgrims and monks. There were thus thousands of missionary saints, trained to carry the Gospel of Christ to the people of Wales. Some of the most austere of these chose to live under great discipline, and we know David was one of them; Samson was another – he was to travel to Brittany and settle there, like Paul Aurelian who became known later (as aforementioned) in northern Brittany at Paul de Leon. These men were all amongst Teilo's friends.

Later St Teilo followed St Samson with many people from Wales at the time of the Yellow Pestilence. Teilo's brother-in-law King Budic ruled in South West Brittany, where his sister could bring up her sons Oudecous and Tyfei in safety, until they were grown and returned with their uncle Teilo, to devote their lives to working for God, back in Wales.

Apart from the monastic routine of prayer and worship, in their little cells monks would laboriously copy out the Gospels, later to strap them on their backs, to depart on their missionary journeys with a staff and some food, but very little else. All labourers and students had to be fed by local farms, for which reason there would be a market place; Llandeilo must have been a very busy place!

xcix

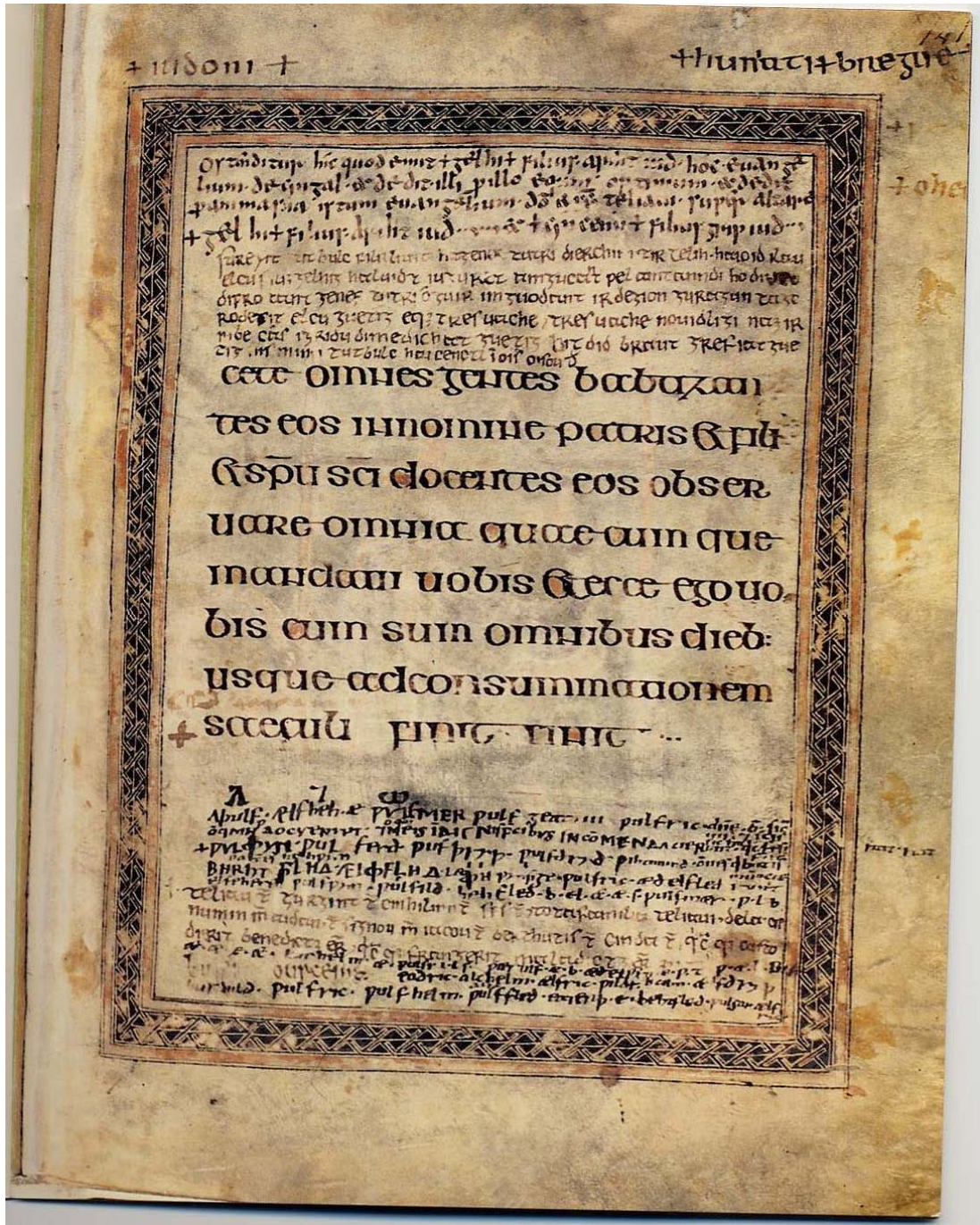
### **The second marginal note.**

The script itself is known as 'insular half-uncial', there being a gradual change in style from the Roman after the sixth century, while the monogrammed letters at the beginning of each Gospel resemble Irish work at their finest. The artist, who designed the magnificent '**Carpet page**', showed that he not only knew the work of Lindisfarne but also had the capacity to understand the design of icons of Mediterranean Coptic and Byzantine origin, both in the design around the borders and, more generally, in the whole concept of the artistry. Again the page depicting St Luke with his crossed staff is very similar to Egyptian design. The colours used by the artist need to be seen; they are much more gentle than the Book of Kells, soft reds and pink, light blue, indigo, purple and ultramarine, gold, primrose yellow and white. The artist shows his wide knowledge of the East, and it resembles Irish work at their finest, but his mixing of paint has not endured

and has flaked badly.

Since I wrote and published my original book on St Teilo in 1995, archaeology discovered a large Roman fort in the grounds of Dynevor Castle, Llandeilo, beside the A40 road; the original fort could have held 2000 men, dating from the first century, that is to say in AD 70, subsequently a smaller holding fort was built on the site of the large one.





The first marginal note written in Welsh, with the text in Latin.

What is quite obvious now is that Llandeilo owed its prominence to the Gold Mines, and became the seat of the Princes of South Wales, an aristocratic land owning society developed close by, whilst the workshops produced valuable jewelry in the vicinity of the Gold Mine, until the gold supply diminished. However the Queen of England still wears a golden wedding ring from the Dolaucothi gold mine even today.

Perhaps the 'Saxon' jewelry hoards recently discovered in fields near Lichfield, could have originated from these workshops at Caew village. The workshops were probably sited where formerly the Roman soldiers were camped in the village and where now a pub stands.

#### Summary.

1) Paulinus wrote the Book complete. The 4 Gospels, Carpet pages, and illustrations.

2) Old Paulinus trained as a Scribe in Rome under the Pope.

3) Then Germanus at Auxerre brought him back home to Wales.

4) Dewi (David), Teilo and Aidan studied under Paulinus for many years at MaesLlanwrthwal.

#### 5) The Mother Church at Caew.

Here the five saints lived, their father was a priest at Pumpsaint.

#### 5) Marginalia

Cingal bought the Book for his best horse, and gave it to Llandeilo Fawr, where it remained on the Altar until the time of Hywel Dda. The Marginalia were written in the oldest Welsh we now have, and refer to farms and parcels of land in the surrounding district, given to the church of Llandeilo Fawr.

6) Aidan returned to Ireland and copied a MS Book which came from Rome. He was punished for this and sent to Iona. Here he stayed, until Northumbria needed a Christian missionary, and Aidan was sent. He founded Lindisfarne 'Holy Island.'

## Chapter Ten

### The Yellow Plague

Unfortunately we have few firm dates for the period; however we do have AD 547 given to us as the date when Wales was under threat from a virulent plague, namely, the 'Yellow Plague' which was moving through the population at terrifying speed. At this time St Teilo, who had succeeded Dubricius in overall charge when Dubricius retired to the island of Bardsey, had to act quickly to evacuate the population.

From his mother church at Llandeilo Fawr he organised parties to flee to the nearest sea port, to sail to Brittany. Ceredigion was the least populated area to head for, speed being of the essence.

We were most fortunate to meet Monsieur L'Abbe le Grand who was vicar of the church of Landeleau. He became very interested in our research, and we stayed with him several times while he

#### **Aux origines de la paroisse : Histoire et légendes.**

Au III<sup>e</sup> siècle commencèrent les invasions barbares(1) qui allaient provoquer l'effondrement de l'Empire romain. Aux attaques extérieures s'ajoutèrent des désordres tels que les révoltes de paysans gaulois contre le pouvoir politique, entraînant la décadence des villes comme celle de Vorgium, le recul économique et un déclin démographique grave attestés par les recherches archéologiques. C'est alors que commença la lente immigration des Bretons d'Outre-Manche, qui allait se maintenir jusqu'au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle. La mer n'avait jamais été une frontière mais plutôt un lien entre Grande-Bretagne et Armorique. L'administration romaine elle-même avait fait venir des soldats bretons en Gaule pour la défense de l'Empire contre les « barbares » venus de l'Est. Sans doute avait-elle même favorisé l'arrivée des émigrés pour repeupler l'Armorique. Ceux-ci venus du Pays de Galles ou d'Irlande quittaient leur île pour des raisons économiques, sociales ou politiques ; ainsi les pressions qu'ils avaient subies de la part des Pictes et des Scots, envahisseurs Celtes venus du nord aux IV<sup>e</sup> et V<sup>e</sup> siècles ; ou celles des Angles et des Saxons, peuples germaniques déjà installés à l'est de la Grande-Bretagne et qui s'infiltrèrent vers le sud aux VI<sup>e</sup> et VII<sup>e</sup> siècles(1). Rien d'étonnant à ce que l'Armorique ait été pour les immigrants une terre de prédilection : ses habitants, celtes aussi, les Osismes, les Coriosolites et les Vénètes, tout en ayant été soumis à l'influence romaine pendant au moins trois siècles, avaient gardé leur langue et leurs coutumes proches de celles des nouveaux venus.

#### **Un ermitage celte.**

Landeleau a une origine religieuse : le mot celte « lan » signifie « lieu consacré à un saint », « ermitage ». Cette forme d'établissement fréquente en Pays de Galles a succédé de peu, dans le temps, aux paroisses proprement dites, les « plouz ». Au terme « lan » est adjoint le nom d'un saint que l'on considère comme le fondateur de l'ermitage.



*St-Teileu sur son cerf. Bois du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Eglise paroissiale.*

took us to see the annual celebrations of St Teilo in Brittany. At a later date we were able to invite him to stay with us in Llandeilo in south Wales, and he even played the organ in our church at Llandeilo.

At another time we were able to explore the northern part of Brittany when Monsieur le Grand was moved to Pol de Leon. In my published book on St Teilo I go into this in more detail, but here we are considering the development of the Cult of St Martin, and so it is time now to return to this theme.

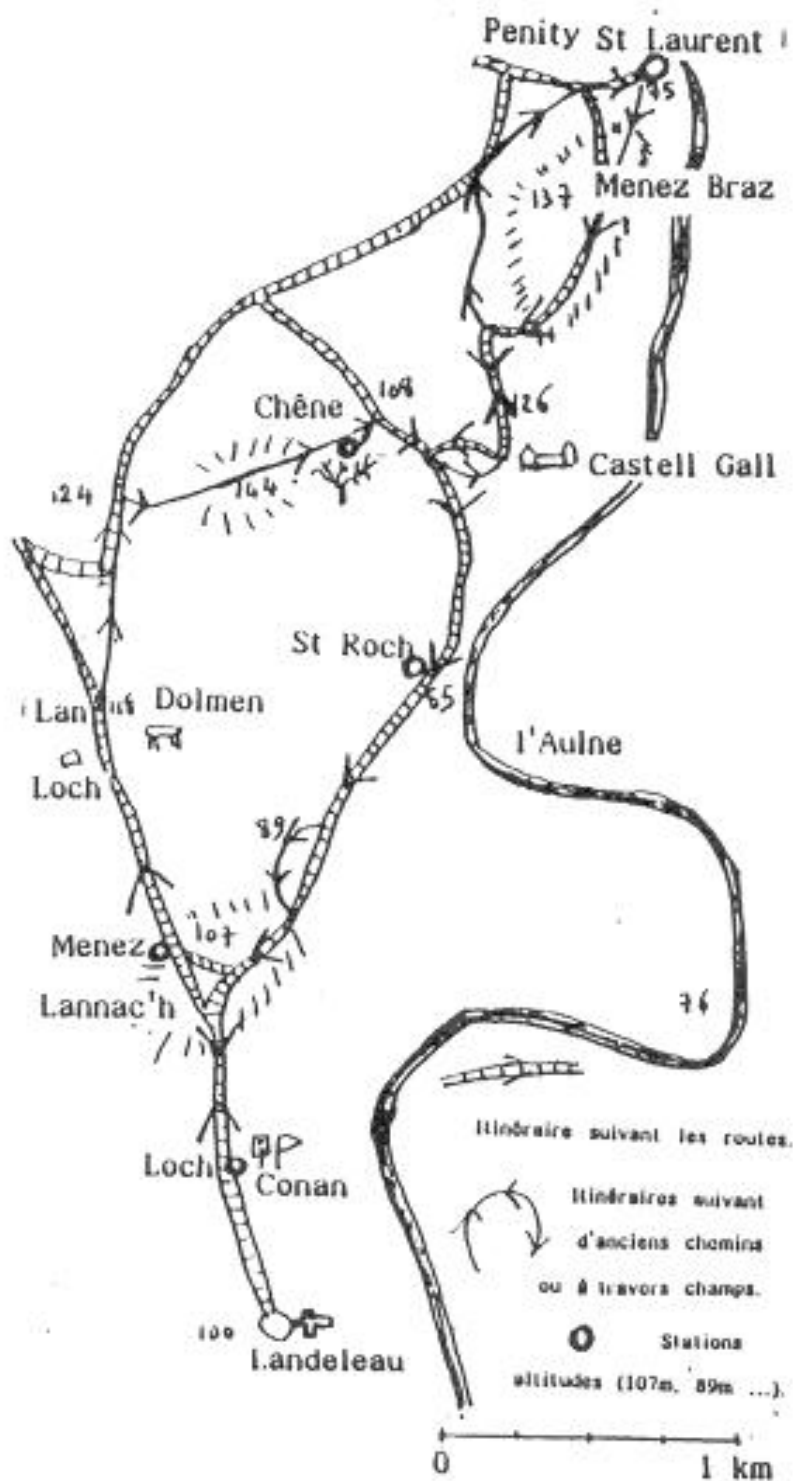
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‘Landeleau, une paroisse du poher des origins a nos jours.’  
 KELTA GRAPHIC/ KAN AN DOUAR ISBN 2-906992-05-4  
 1988. The legends of St Teilo are still commemorated annually in

<p>Saint Théleau est l'un des nombreux saints celtes jamais reconnus officiellement par Rome, moines itinérants venus du Pays de Galles ou d'Irlande. En ces religieux, on peut voir aussi des chefs de clans issus des grandes familles bretonnes émigrées en Armorique. Les récits de leurs « vies » écrits dans les abbayes entre le VII<sup>e</sup> et le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle comptent parmi les rares documents que nous possédons pour essayer de comprendre cette période obscure entre les invasions barbares et l'époque féodale. Là se mêlent étroitement l'histoire et la légende : deux « vies » de Saint Théleau nous sont parvenues.</p>	
<p>— Une écrite en latin au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle : c'est le « livre de Llandaf », l'un des quatre principaux évêchés du Pays de Galles, actuellement dans la banlieue de Cardiff.</p>	
<p>— Une autre écrite en français au début du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle (et traduite du latin).</p>	
<p><b>Vie de Saint Théleau.</b></p>	
<p>En voici un résumé : St Théleau (orthographié aussi Telo, Theliau, Thelyan, latinisé en Telianus) aurait vécu au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle ; appartenant à une grande famille galloise, il aurait dirigé un monastère et même l'évêché de Llandaf. Au retour d'un voyage à Jérusalem, il aurait quitté le Pays de Galles avec les siens, chassés par la peste, pour rejoindre St Samson, son ami d'enfance, à Dol, puis son beau-frère Budic en Cornouaille. C'est ainsi qu'il vint sur les bords de l'Aulne. Son existence est attestée par la toponymie : vingt cinq lieux portent son nom en Galles et huit en Bretagne entre Dol et la Cornouaille. Il serait resté là sept ans et sept mois avant de repartir en son pays d'origine où il mourut entre 560 et 580.</p>	
<p><b>La légende.</b></p>	
<p>Le récit précédent, très vraisemblable, atteste l'existence du personnage historique mais il est accompagné dans les deux textes de nombreuses histoires allégoriques et de la description de miracles que l'on retrouve souvent dans</p>	<p><i>St-Théleau réfugié dans son chêne pour échapper aux chiens de East Galf. (vitraux de l'église paroissiale, 1944).</i></p> <p>d'autres vies de saints telles que celles de St-David, St-Cada, St-Mandé, St-Patern et St-Edern ; ainsi l'épisode du cerf aidant St-Théleau comme St-Mandé à chercher des bûche dans la forêt ; ainsi la légende du livre resté sec sous la pluie comme celui de St-David ; ainsi l'histoire de la fontaine que St-Théleau fit jaillir avec St-Samson lorsqu'il le remplaça à Dol pendant que celui-ci partait rendre visite au roi franc</p>

Brittany.

# La Troménie : le parcours.



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Dubricius , when he retired had handed his responsibilities to St Teilo, so that Teilo had to look after all his countrymen in Brittany leaving St David as Archbishop in Wales to remain there in control. It was a very important period for both countries.

Saint Teilo's brother-in-law King Budic had previously fled to Britain, when his twin brother Maxentius took control of south east Brittany, and King Budic was forced to flee for his life. He found himself in south Wales, where he settled for some time, and was eventually to marry Annauved, St Teilo's sister. Of their children Heol eventually succeeded his father Budic as King, leaving Ishmael, Tyfei, Oudoceus, Theodoric and Meliau as Teilo's nephews, several of whom returned to Britain when the plague was abated and became famous saints in their own right in the next generation in Britain.

During this period the Saxons saw their chance to move inland as far as old Sarum, an ancient Celtic Christian settlement which today is close to Salisbury.

Teilo's party headed for Dol to seek shelter for a while with his friend St Samson. Here they both planted apple trees and it must have been a very hectic time, since the uprooted Welsh families had to find land to settle and make home for a while. Many would never return to Wales. In any event they all knew that they could not think about that for a considerable time. It turned out that the fever in Wales did not thoroughly abate for more than seven years.

In my published book on St Teilo I delve into this in more detail, but here we are considering the Cult of St Martin, and so it is time now to return to this theme.

This was a general movement also, for we know that in northern Britain, (Northumbria today) Ida, who ruled this area for twelve years, took the opportunity to push his borders further west, his people being Angles who came from north Germany; he was to build Bamburgh and to fight Brychan's grandson, Urien

Rheged, finally imprisoning him at Lindisfarne. Urien and Arthur had fought together against the Saxons in the north.

We were interested to notice that some of the place names in Brittany were similar to those in south Wales, particularly names such as 'the Black Mountains' and 'Landelau' for instance,

perhaps Welsh settlers brought the names of their homes in Wales with them.

Yellow Pestilence. 'AD 547 for seven years and seven months.'

Teilo's brother-in-law, King Budic, ruled in the south-west of Brittany, so that Teilo's sister brought up her children there until they were grown and able to return with their uncle Teilo to Britain. Oudocous and Tyfei returned to play their part in the church in Wales.

**Dynasty of King Budic and St Teilo's nephews who rule in Glamorgan.**

**Riothamus**

(leader of 2<sup>nd</sup> emigration of British to Brittany)

**Daniel Dremund (Cybrydan)**

**S. Teilo** (died c580) **S. Mabon Annaued** = King Budic

Budic's twin Maxentius, Prince of Cournaille, expelled his brother Budic from Brittany.

**Budic and Annaued's children Heol S. Ishmael. S Tyfei . S Oudoceus. Theodoric = Enhinti**

sister of Urien Rheged ruler of Gower, Conqueror of Powys, his armies fought from the Cheviots to Gower. **Heol** was successor to his father Budic. **S.Oudoceus** succeeded S Teilo.

**Theodoric** retired to Tintern, his son **Mouric** expanded his power throughout his reign, ruler of Erging and under ruler of Demetia. His main centre was in Cadoc's place in Glamorgan. He named his son after his father **Theodoric**.

## Chapter Eleven

### Queen Bertha c539-612, Saxon England and the foundation of Christianity in Kent

The father of Bertha, the Merovingian King Charibert Ist of Paris, was a dissolute war-monger and womaniser – with at least three concubines. In contrast Bertha's mother, Queen Ingoberg, was a most refined and pious woman, being deeply insulted by her husband's lusty behaviour. Eventually, her objections so annoyed him, that he sent her and her daughter Princess Bertha away from court, to live in retirement at Tours. It was here that Princess Bertha was brought up in the tradition of her great, great grandmother, Queen Clothild, who died in 544 after marrying tough old King Clovis of the Merovingian dynasty and converting him to Christianity.

The village of Tours in those days had many large mansions inhabited by women in similar circumstance to Queen Ingoberg, and living in semi-religious seclusion, close to the now ruined abbey of Marmoutiers, founded by St Martin in the 4<sup>th</sup> century (316-397). Since women are scarcely mentioned in history books, it is hard to deliver precise facts, so that Bertha's lineage is difficult to decipher; however since it was this Queen who brought Christianity to the pagan court of the Saxons, she and her dynasty were crucial to this wonderful story, and it is interesting to note that her training happened in the very place where St Martin founded his cult. The village of Tours can hardly have altered very much in all those years. Based on the river Loire, it still contains houses fit for the upbringing of a Queen, whilst on the side of a cliff close by are the caves, where Martin's monks lived, and a church at Marmoutiers, which is still open to visitors today.

It is time now to see what was happening on the eastern coast of Great Britain. Here again I find myself closely involved, for by 1945, the second World War being over, Queen Bertha's school was anxious to return to its roots. The following September therefore, we all found ourselves travelling by train, with our rabbits or guinea pigs in the carriage alongside, to start to rebuild the life of our school again, from where it had departed in 1939.



Our two head-mistresses, Miss Randal Harris (the Classics teacher) and Miss Hunt (the Music teacher), were to find the two school houses in dreadful condition, where the troops had been billeted during the war, and ‘the grass almost as high as an elephant’s eye’ in that large garden between them. It was a truly daunting task, trying to reconstruct our exclusive small school once again. The chapel however seemed to have been preserved unharmed, along with those murals painted by former students on its walls, depicting the story of our Queen Bertha. Her arrival there on the Isle of Thanet must have been an equally daunting experience for her all those centuries ago.

That winter term I remember thinking how truly cold it was, and how flat, with a cruel wind blowing straight at us over the North Sea all the way from Siberia. One would look out of the window where German prisoners of war used to work in those fields, and I recall so well feeling very sorry for them. I missed my Welsh hills terribly, while those POWs also looked so very lonely and in despair. We could not help wondering how the young Queen Bertha felt as she arrived; we were in Birchington, but she had landed on that Isle of Thanet close by. Presumably her first view of England was of those glorious White Cliffs along that south coast; she was not much older than us, perhaps even a teenager when in 558, she came to marry King Ethelbert, who was probably thirty at the time and a very successful warrior seeking a wife. He therefore sent an ambassador seeking the young Princess Bertha in marriage. Since he was descended from Hengist, who had landed on the shores of Britain and conquered Thanet, he considered the conquest of England now needed expansion, about which Bede tells us the history so very fully.

However Queen Bertha had her Christian Chaplain Liudhard and her courtiers to accompany her and, although she was so young, she had been trained all her life for this moment. King Ethelbert had agreed that she would be free to worship, and given her an old Roman chapel, St Martin’s church, which, although being in a dilapidated condition, he allowed her to restore. The Cambrian Archaeologists visited this church at Canterbury during their summer programme 2010. I enclose below the details on an old brochure written by the Chapel Vicar in 1966.

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Many years later, Adrian and I were privileged to visit the Reverend Christopher Donaldson and his wife in their retirement home, a cottage near Cullompton, where we had a very special time, to discuss his books, which he gave to me, on his quest for St Martin, which of course also became such an inspiration to me.

### **St Martin's Church, Canterbury.**

Compiled by the Vicar, the Reverend Christopher Donaldson in 1966.

*The Tower was added to the Church in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. It contains three bells, one dated 1392.*

*The monument of Sir John Finch, Baron of Fordwich, who was Speaker of the House of Commons in the reign of Charles I, is now on the north wall of the Tower.*

*The Church was used as an oratory by Queen Bertha, wife of King Ethelbert King of Kent, before the coming of St Augustine (A.D. 597). It is here that St Augustine and his companions were wont "to meet and pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptise." It is stated by Bede to have been built while the Romans occupied Britain. It is dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, who died in A.D. 401.*

*THE NAVE. Near the west entrance on the south side is a Saxon and Norman font, built with 22 separate stones. King Ethelbert is said to have been baptised in it by St. Augustine in*

*A.D. 597; indeed the common seal of St. Augustine (1280) represents the King being baptised in a font of similar shape.*

*The Chancel Arch is 13<sup>th</sup> century and the roof 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Saxon roof was flat, the line of which can still be seen at the top of the Chancel Arch. In the north wall traces of the Norman door are still to be seen. This was filled in in 1840, when the present pews were made. To the right of this door is the ancient stoup for Holy Water. This stoup is very unusual, because it has a flat base; a vessel containing the Holy Water had to be stood inside. On the same side further eastward is a fine piece of oak carving, dated 1583, which represents St. Martin of Tours dividing his cloak with the beggar.*

*Over the main entrance in the west wall the outline of a very large arch or opening can be plainly seen. On each side of this arch is a Roman window, both of which were lengthened either by Saxon or Norman builders.*

*To the right of this door and about two feet from the floor is a Norman Squint or Lepers Window, through which they could get a clear view of the altars, there being only stone seats around the walls in those days, for the aged and the sick; others had to kneel on rush mats. There were originally three altars dedicated to St Martin, St Mary and St Nicholas and, in the S.E. corner, where one of these altars stood, one can see a Norman piscinum. This is where the priest used to empty the water after the washing of the sacramental vessels. It is claimed to be one of the best preserved piscinum in England to-day.*

*In the first pew next to the piscinum there is some Roman pink plaster on the walls, where there was originally a rood beam on which the Holy Cross light was kept perpetually burning.*

*THE CHANCEL. As one enters the Chancel there is in the south wall a square-headed Roman doorway and a little further eastward is a round-headed Saxon one, which may have been the one used by Queen Bertha when she came there to worship, before St Augustine landed. Next to this door is one of the finest samples of Roman work to be found in the Church. Below the windows the walls are claimed to be original, built by the Romans between 300-400 A.D. and thus the oldest Church in England.*

*Inside the Altar rails and on the North side is a tomb, commonly called "Queen Bertha's Tomb," but it is probably the tomb of a restorer of the Church during the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the wall above the tomb is a small brass plate, the wording of which states: "If by chance anywhere near here lie the remains of Bertha, wife of King Ethelbert, let them rest in peace till the last coming of the Lord Jesus." This wording was composed and placed there by Canon Chesshyre, a former Rector of the Parish.*

*On the floor near this tomb are two Elizabethan brasses, the one to the north being to Thomas Stoughton, of Ash, dated 1591, and the one to the south to Michael Frances and his wife, 1587. Round these brasses is a tessellated pavement, parts of which may be pre-*

*Norman, for it is not unlike Roman mosaic. In the South Wall is an early English sedile (or seat for Bishops) with a border of Roman tiles.*

*All the building from the altar steps to the east wall was added during the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the chancel with its extensions being now the same length as the nave.*

This booklet was written by the Rev Christopher Donaldson, when he was Vicar of this Church and published by Stevens & Son, Northgate Printing Works, Canterbury.

Whether it was actually founded by St Martin himself we will never know.

(Today the font is composed of stones held together at the base, decorated in Saxon style, above which is a section decorated in Norman style, probably added later.<sup>civ</sup> The initial page from a twelfth century manuscript, showing St. Augustine and King Ethelbert of Kent, appears to have something similar to the bottom half of this font, supported on legs, perhaps at King Ethelbert's baptism.)

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#### King Ethelbert and the kingdoms of the Southern English.

In order to place Ethelbert in his proper historical setting, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* describes Ethelbert 'Aethelbert' 'as a most powerful king, who extended the boundaries of his dominion as far as the great river Humber, by which the northern peoples of the English are separated. Bede began writing various works c703, he completed *The Ecclesiastical History of the the English People* in 731 and he died in 735, he not only re-asserts the importance of the Humber as a political boundary, but also names the early kings, who had once held lordship throughout the country to the south.

*The story of Bertha is the story of her private prayer, and God's blessing of it; her life inspired her husband and his court with high respect for both her and her faith. So we see the transformation of the early Apostolic Christian British/Eastern Faith change to become Roman Christianity, which was again recaptured until eventually Pope Gregory sent 40 monks, led by St*

*Augustine to Canterbury, to preach the Gospel and, with the Queen's help, the monks were able to approach the king to preach to him. He finally became a Christian and was baptised in a public ceremony. The Queen's prayers were thereby answered and England began to turn towards Christianity.*

Queen Bertha had entered marriage to a pagan knowing that Ethelbert would find it difficult to accept her Christian faith. But he was much impressed by the way in which she conducted herself and the behaviour of her entourage. And so they continued, led by her bishop Liudhard, and supported by her maidens who would also worship with her in the church of St Martin for some twenty years, until in 596 Pope Gregory was moved to send a mission to convert the pagans in Britain. Even so Ethelbert, who was a pagan and worshipped the pagan god Thor, was suspicious at first. But after some time he invited Augustine to preach at Canterbury where the family lived, and eventually he was baptised in the small Roman church dedicated to St Martin, which was Queen Bertha's private chapel, but later King Ethelbert gave the site of the house in Canterbury where they lived to become the Cathedral we know today. Undoubtedly God honoured Queen Bertha's faithful prayers and her courageous life must have inspired her husband and his court with high respect for both her and her faith, so that after some time Pope Gregory

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was able to send a mission to the British court, and King Ethelbert arranged for the monks to stay on the island of Thanet, and even eventually to preach to the king. After some time Ethelbert did become a Christian and he was baptised by St Augustine in a public ceremony. Their daughter Ethelburga was also a Christian but their son was not. Another son Erconwold (Erkenwald) became bishop of London, and founded his own monastery on the river Thames at Chertsey in Surrey for the East Saxons.

*Ethelbert died in 616, twenty-one years after he accepted Christianity, but before he died he established a Code of Laws for the Church. He was buried beside Queen Bertha in St Martin's Church. Their son Eadbald had refused to accept Christianity. Not only did he refuse to accept Christ, but he was polluted with such fornication that after his father's death, he married his father's second wife. He was afflicted by frequent fits of madness and possessed an unclean spirit. He left three sons who remained heathen and allowed their subjects to worship idols, practising open idolatry during their father's lifetime. Eventually Eadbald did accept Christianity and put away his father's second wife and remarried.*

### **Saxon England**

**King Aethelfrith**, the grandson of **Ida**, king of Northumbria, was killed by **Raedwald**; he died a year after Ethelbert in 617.

I quote:

*The list begins with **Aelle** of the South Saxons, and continues through **Ceawlin** of the West Saxons and **Aergelbert (Ethelbert)** of Kent to **Raedwald** of the East Angles. He is followed by **three Northumbrian overlords, Edwin, Oswald and Oswiu**, with whom he closes – apparently because Bede wished to avoid the anti-climax of carrying it beyond the great name of Oswiu, who had ruled over the Picts and Scots as well as over Northumbrians and the southern English.*

*But it is clear from other evidence that **Wulfhere**, king of the Mercians, was supreme in the south for some years before his death in 674, but had been omitted from Bede's history. Sixty years later Bede also expressly states that all the English provinces south of the Humber were subject to **Aethelbald**, king*

*of the Mercians, while the supremacy of **Offa**, Aethelbald's successor, determined the whole character of English history in the last third of the century.*

*Either through prejudice or, more probably, through the mechanical following of Bede, the only other ancient writer who made a similar list also omitted the Mercian overlords who succeeded Oswiu (not Oswine, who was a monk of great merit).*

Other sources claim that Oswine was next in line but was murdered by Oswiu.

**Some Rulers in England during the invasions from the continent.** *Bede gives us a list of the early kings. (I have slightly altered the order).*

1. **Caelin** (King of the West Saxons), also known as Ceawlin.
2. **Aethelbert** (King of Kent) d.616, buried next to his wife Bertha in St Martin's church at Canterbury.
3. **Aelle** (King of the South Saxons was next after Aethelbert to rule). Edwin's father was King Aelle; his sister Brigeswide, married King Aethelfrith (593-616), who fought against both the Scots and the Welsh at Degastan in 603.
4. **Ida** (of Bernicia) whose sons were Oswald, who became the saintly king of Northumbria, and his brother Oswiu, who like his father Aethelfrith became King of the Bernicians after his brother Oswald's death.

**Aethelfrith** was son of **King Ida** of Bernicia.

This period is so confusing due to the in-fighting between all the would be Saxon kings. Fortunately they now possessed the written Laws which Ethelbert had drawn up before his death, but the rivalry continued, and Edwin was moved from one court

to another as a boy fearing harm might come from **Aethelfrith's** power. 'He was fortunate to be sheltered by **Raedwald or Redwald** king of East Anglia, who not only refused to hand Edwin over, but prepared to help him recover his lost kingdom. It is important to remember that Edwin had this stay in East Anglia. Raedwald's palace was at Rendlesham, and the Sutton Hoo ship burial was not far away.'<sup>cvi</sup>

1 **Redwald** (King of the East Angles). Father of a son Hereic, who fathered Hilda Abbess of Whitby, but died of poison before she was born.

2 **Edwin** (King of Northumbria). i.e north of the Humber, *he ruled over all the inhabitants of Britain, English and Britons alike (except for Kent). He even brought the English rule to the Menevian islands (Anglesey and Man) which lie between England and Ireland, and which belong to the Britons. (I quote Bede there).*

3 **Oswald**, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians.

4 **Oswine** murdered by Oswiu (Oswy).

5 **Oswiu**, his brother who held roughly the same territory even into the territory of the tribes of the Picts and the Irish of the north. Oswiu was king at the time of the important Synod of Whitby in 664.

We continue to trace Queen Bertha's family descendants. In Northumbria King Edwin married King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha's daughter Ethelberga (also known as Ethelburg or Tate), as his second wife, to produce their daughter Eanfled who eventually became an Abbess of Whitby. Like her mother Ethelburg took a monk named Paulinus with her to her new kingdom as her Chaplain, who baptised Hilda, later to become the great abbess of Whitby. Bertha's grand daughter, Eanfled daughter of Edwin and Ethelburga was educated by Hilda and succeeded her as Abbess of Whitby in 680. Bede tells this story.

On the death of Edwin, Oswald the son of Aethelfrith of Bernicia became king in Northumbria in Edwin's place, thus joining the two kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia, whilst Queen Bertha's daughter and grand-daughter fled back to Kent with her priest, Paulinus, to join her brother who was the king of Kent since the death of their father Ethelbert. Her brother Eadbald had surprisingly become a Christian after being a very pagan youth. We are not told when and how this happened, however it may well have followed the return of his sister Ethelburga from Northumbria.

Rather than a long chapter describing the Saxon destruction of



the country by the death of the natives who lost their heritage, I will continue with the Christian story.<sup>evii-</sup>

The Venerable Bede, almost a contemporary historian, was born around the year 673, and he is an invaluable source, who gives us a fascinating account of the period which was just over one hundred years before his birth. He finished his history in 731 and died in 735, not so long after the death of Ethelbert, so that his book is almost contemporary, and we can trust it.

However, we know that in Ethelbert's time a Celtic Christian settlement which today is close to Salisbury, Old Sarum, fell to the English and, during the seven years that followed, the whole picture changed in England.

This was a general movement also, for we know that in the north (Northumbria today) Ida, who ruled this area for twelve years, took the opportunity to push his borders further west; his people were Angles who came from north Germany and he was to build Bamburgh and to fight Brychan's grandson Urien Rheged, finally imprisoning him at Lindisfarne. Arthur came to Urien's aid and fought the Saxons in the north.

I quote from Bede, as well as from *Anglo-Saxon England* which is written by Sir Frank Stenton. When we come to Northumbria which involves much of Queen Bertha's family, I have also used the Northumbrian history written by T.H.Rowland,<sup>cviii</sup> which we found on a Celtic tour in 1994, when we sold our house and were looking for somewhere to live.

Bill Bryson writes in his book *At Home. A short history of private life.*<sup>cix</sup> His unique perspective is witty and profound, giving a picture of how much we lost of the finer things of life by this pagan Saxon invasion, never to be recovered until quite recent times. Queen Bertha however must have found her task a truly testing one. Her courage and steadfast faith can only be admired. Included in this chapter are some of the Saxon family trees.

Professor William Rees drew a series of maps describing the conquests of the invaders at this time.

These were dangerous times. Kent and Essex reverted to

heathenism when the Christian rulers died, while the new bishop of London Mellitus fled to the continent; however he had a vision of Saint Peter, who came to him and chided him for fleeing in fear. This vision was accompanied by flagilation and the following morning when bishop Mellitus showed the marks on his body to a colleague and told him that St Peter had visited him during the night, his friend found it difficult to believe until he was shown the marks of flagilation and then of course he did believe, and Mellitus agreed to return to England c624 where he was eventually martyred by fire.

In *Chapter 9: page 55* Bede tells the story:- *Since Bishop Augustine had advised the Pope that the harvest was great but the workers were few, Pope Gregory sent more colleagues and ministers of the word together with his messengers. First and foremost among these were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus; and he sent with them all such things as were generally necessary for the worship and ministry of the Church, such as sacred vessels, altar cloths and church ornaments, vestments for priests and clerks, relics of the holy apostles and martyrs, and very many manuscripts. He also sent a letter in which he announced that he had despatched the pallium to him and at the same time directed how he should organise the bishops in Britain.*

By this time Bertha had died, King Ethelbert had become a Christian and, later, after St Augustine died and was buried with great honour at Canterbury by Ethelbert, Ethelbert died after ruling for 56 years, and was buried with Queen Bertha in St Martin's church at Canterbury, twenty-one years after accepting the faith. Bede tells us – *King Ethelbert of Kent, after ruling his temporal kingdom gloriously for fifty-six years, entered upon the eternal joys of the heavenly kingdom. He was the third English king to rule over all the southern kingdoms, which are divided from the north by the river Humber and surrounding territory; but he was the first to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.*

It appears that at this stage the Welsh King Cadfan in Anglesey took Edwin to live at his court as foster brother to his son Cadwallon until he was old enough to claim his throne. King Aethelfrith was the ruling power at this time and the main threat to

Edwin, so that king Raedwald took it upon himself to protect Edwin by sending him to the Welsh Court, until he was in a position to defend himself. Here Edwin was brought up as a Christian in Wales and, until in 605, with the help of Raedwald, he became King of Northumbria, to rule from 616-632.

King Edwin was the second son of the reigning monarch King Aelle, the first king of the South Saxons who reigned in Sussex.

He was the first king recorded by the 8<sup>th</sup> century chronicler Bede to have overlordship over all the other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, except Kent and, when he died, became the first 'Britain-ruler' according to their records.

## Chapter Twelve

### The founding of Christianity in Northumbria. King Edwin and Queen Ethelburga.

Bede writes in his Book II Page 78 (Chapter 5):

*The first to hold the like sovereignty was **Aelle**, king of the South Saxons; the second was **Caelin** king of the West Saxons, known in their own language as **Ceawlin**; the third, as we have said, was **Aethelbert**, king of Kent; the fourth was **Raedwald**, king of the East Angles; the fifth was **Edwin**, king of Northumbria, the nation inhabiting the district north of the Humber.*

King Edwin was the second son of the reigning monarch, King Aelle, the first king of the South Saxons, who reigned in Sussex.

Edwin was the first king recorded by the 8<sup>th</sup> century chronicler Bede to have overlordship over other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, and, when he died, was the first 'Britain-ruler' according to their records.

Because Edwin was still a boy and too young to rule, Raedwald, King of East Anglia, who later helped him to recover his kingdom, sent him to Anglesey for protection at the Welsh King Cadfan's court and to be brought up as foster-brother to King Cadfan's own son Cadwallon, as a Christian in Wales. This time that Edwin spent in Wales must have given him an invaluable overview of the geography around the Celtic Sea, for Northumbria at this time was divided into two kingdoms, and there was rivalry between them. In the north King Ida ruled the kingdom of Bernicia (north of the Tees), and in the south King Ella ruled the kingdom of Deira. Both were strong leaders and, because of the rivalry between them, by the time their grandchildren were growing up, it was too dangerous for them to continue living there, for Ethelfrid, the grandson of Ida, now invaded Deira, and their royal family fled into exile.

Three years later, after Edwin had inherited the throne in 617, when Hild was three, he called her mother Brigeswide and the two little girls back to live with his family. Edwin had killed the usurper of his kingdom of Bernicia and driven the three sons of Ethelfrid into exile with the Picts.

Edwin married and had two children and he lived with his family at Yeavinging. T.H.Rowland describes it '*as a royal palace*'. Here important persons of the kingdom would meet the king in council. It was more important than either the banqueting hall or the hunting lodge.<sup>cx</sup>

T.H.Rowland writes '*This was an area of the greatest importance in the seventh century, the period of Northumbrian supremacy. Edwin's kingdom stretched from Edwin's burgh on the Forth to the Humber and included York. Archaeology has shown Yeavinging to be an important residence and place of assembly.*'<sup>cx</sup>

*Eventually Edwin had still greater power and ruled over all the inhabitants of Britain, English and Britons alike except for Kent alone. He even brought under English rule the Mevanian Islands (Anglesey and Man), which lie between England and Ireland and belong to the Britons..*

Edwin was the son of Aelle, king of Deira, one of his sisters Acha beng married to Aethelfrith, king of Bernicia; they had two sons, Oswald and Oswy. Another sibling fathered Hereric, so that Hereric was Edwin's nephew, who, now with his wife Brigeswide and little daughter Hereswith, fled to the small kingdom of Elmete. Here Hereric was poisoned and died just before his second daughter was born. Her name was Hild<sup>cxii</sup> and her mother had a vision just before Hild was born in Elmete; in her deep distress (we are not told what the vision was), however it is clear that Hilda was destined to become an important influence in Christian history thereafter in Northumbria.

After the death of his first wife Edwin's second wife became Ethelburga, also known as 'Tate,' the daughter of Queen Bertha and King Aethelbert of Kent. Their brother Eadbald was not a Christian when on his father's death in 616 he became king of Kent. On his accession, Eadbald married his father's (?mistress) second wife, to have children after Bertha's death. This was a setback for the Church.

### **Northumbria**

Interestingly Ethelburga's brother Eadbald, now the King of Kent, was rather reluctant to agree to his sister's marriage

‘because Edwin was not a Christian’, showing that Eadbald himself had at last been converted to Christianity, and had put away his father’s concubine, and married by this time. Queen Bertha’s influence is clearly to be found in the lives of her children. King Edwin reigned from 616-633; he married Ethelburga, Queen Bertha’s daughter, and on their marriage she brought with her Paulinus her Chaplain, who was consecrated Bishop of Northumbria.

Bede gives us a most interesting account of Edwin’s conversion to Christianity; he put up quite a resistance to it, but by 627 on Easter Eve he accepted Ethelburga’s chaplain Paulinus’s attempts to convert him and, on the birth of their daughter Eanfled, she was dedicated to the Lord by King Edwin, whereby with Hild and his household they were all baptised at York. <sup>cxiii</sup> In the fullness of time Hilda was to become the great abbess of Whitby and Eanfled succeeded her also as abbess, on Hilda’s death in 680.

Bede has a great deal to say about Edwin, so I will try to abbreviate it, but it is a most interesting and worthwhile study.

When Edwin asked for the hand of Ethelburga in marriage, her brother, now king of Kent, said that he was not in favour of his sister marrying a man who was not a Christian, which implies that Eadbald her brother had already embraced the Christian faith. Not only this but Edwin had killed Oswine who had ruled Northumbria as king before him, to take his kingdom. Edwin held out against Christianity for a long time; there may have been several reasons why he did this; one of them may have been political, for his chief advisor was the pagan Coifi and clearly they had fought many battles together in order to secure his kingdom. However Paulinus, Ethelburga’s chaplain, now the Bishop, was not a man to give up, and eventually Bede tells us that his persistence did win Edwin over to Christianity.

Edwin was the first Christian king of Northumbria. Queen Bertha’s daughter Ethelburga (known as Tate) and Paulinus her Chaplain were largely influential in his conversion and, on the birth of their daughter, Edwin dedicated her to the Lord. Her name was Eanfled and at her Christening in York Edwin was also baptised at the same time. Bede writes so beautifully that it would

be much better to read the story in Bede's own words, for he brings it all to life so well.

Edwin's tragic end came in the battle of Hatfield Chase against his former foster brother Cadwallon. By this time Edwin had overrun much of the British territory belonging to King Cadfan, including Anglesey and the island of Man, both of which were British, as though he had forgotten all the kindness he had received from Cadwallon's father Cadfan.

The end came when Edwin was killed at *the battle of Hatfield Chase in 632* against King Penda of Mercia, with whom Cadwallon had joined the fight against Edwin and invaded Northumbria. Edwin's head was to be taken to York, finally to be kept in the church. Two of his sons were killed, but Paulinus managed to escape with Eanfled and her mother Ethelburga by sea to Kent. Cadwallon meanwhile ravaged the kingdom of Edwin, while Mercia took much of the land. However Oswald was to become Northumbria's next king.

It is not difficult to understand what motivated Cadwallon to destroy Edwin's kingdom. It must have seemed unthinkable to him that Edwin had returned his father Cadfan's Christian kindness, by bringing his army to capture and overrun all Cadfan's territory. Edwin took most of Southern England except Kent and ruled it all peacefully for which Bede praises him. He was a very good king. Not only this, but in 605 (before Edwin's time), at the battle of Chester, the English had murdered all the Druids who came from Iona to pray for peace at the battle, which was a disaster for the Welsh. Of course they had no arms, and this massacre was the end of the Druids, who were the wise men of the British race. They consisted of poets and musicians, and priests who were deeply religious; they knew about Jesus and had awaited his coming. They studied the stars and mathematics and rhetoric, and all the history and poetry of Wales, including all those subjects necessary for sophisticated learning i.e. Latin & Greek – in fact their training was not completed until they reached the age of twenty - they memorised everything. And therefore with their death, all this precious knowledge was lost, indeed perhaps the most significant loss of all for the Welsh.

Our study of Queen Bertha's family has now reached the period of her grandchildren. Bede gives us the story of the three kings of Northumbria, which is much more interesting than the chaotic history which I have quoted above.

Ethelburga, sister of the king of Kent, had married King Edwin of Northumbria as his second wife and on his death, protected by Paulinus her bishop, she fled back to Kent with her daughter Eanfled. Eventually she became Abbess of Barking, as mother and instructress. Her brother Erconwold (Erkenwald) became Bishop of London, and founded his own monastery for the East Saxons on the river Thames at Chertsey in Surrey. He also assisted his sister at Barking, which was a double monastery, having both men and women. Their lives were separate, but they occasionally worshiped together.

The next king of Northumbria was Oswald, a Christian living in Iona. Columba was asked to send a missionary monk from Iona to found a monastery in Northumbria. The first monk who was chosen to go failed to convert the Northumbrians, and wished to return to Iona. It appears that he was a rather stern man named Cormac, who returned to Iona having totally failed to evangelise them. At a meeting with the monks on his return to Iona, Aidan is quoted as saying to Cormac "Brother, couldn't you have been a bit gentler?" Everyone present fell silent and turning to Aidan they realised that he was right, so that Aidan was sent with twelve companions, to evangelise pagan Northumbria to the delight of King Oswald who was clearly close to Aidan in his childhood.

Northumbria was again divided; Oswald came from Iona to defend the people against Cadwallon late in 633 and, like the Druids before him, Oswald and his army prayed before the battle at dawn; thus he won the battle at Heavenfield, near Hexham, although his was the smaller army.

The defeat of the Northumbrian army, and meant that the new Christian king, who was brought up in Iona, caused the break with the Roman Church, for instead we had a Celtic Bishop, Aidan, in charge and the introduction of Celtic Christianity from Ireland under Columba. Bede writes –

*The sixth to rule within the same bounds was **Oswald**, the most*



*Christian king of the Northumbrians, while the seventh was his brother Oswy, who for a time held almost all the same territory. They later overwhelmed and made tributary even the tribes of the*<sup>cxiv</sup> *Picts and Irish, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain.*

King Oswald ruled from c634 – August 642, he was venerated as a saint in the Middle Ages. He was the son of Aethelfrith of Bernicia and after the battle of Hatfield Chase he brought Bernicia and Deira together again by defeating Cadwallon ap Cadfan.

Aidan was now a bishop, but he did not speak English, and so, very often the king travelled with Aidan, to translate what was being said on their journeys around the country. Iona sent twelve missionary monks with Aidan to assist him and we are given an insight into Aidan's character, when we read of his gentle approach to his missionary work.

The historian Bede gives us a picture of life in the kingdom in King Oswald's time. One of the stories tells of Aidan sitting at the king's table with a fine banquet served on silver dishes, meanwhile a crowd of poor people in the cold outside had nothing to eat. Aidan suggested to the king that they needed the food far more than the king and his nobles, and king Oswald agreed, and ordered that the food be given to the crowds outside Bamburgh Castle, and served on the silver dishes which, after they had eaten, the king ordered that they should be broken up and shared amongst the poor people. Aidan was so thrilled that his Christian teaching had really been taken seriously. He grasped the king's hand and said 'May this hand never perish', and sure enough after his death his hand was preserved in a silver casket in Bamburgh!

King Oswald told Aidan that he could choose where he wished to build his monastery, so Aidan chose Lindisfarne, which, being an island, was cut off from the mainland twice a day by the tide, giving a perfect place for prayer. However, when the tide was out, it was possible to walk there. Here Aidan built a school for boys, and a scriptorium. In 1994 during our Celtic tour we stayed there, and our room looked down on the statue of St Aidan. Four brothers are mentioned as being trained there in Aidan's school, where they learnt Latin as part of the curriculum, enabling them also to read the Bible. The brothers names were Cedd, Cynebil,

Caelin and Chad; all being sons of Ceawlin. Cedd and Chad were to become bishops, and Cynebil and Caelin became priests. They would have attended school at a very early age, at five or even earlier. They would also have learnt to help on the farm, and with crops, for the monastery would be self-sufficient. They learnt prayer, meditation, fasting and study of the Holy Scriptures amongst a very full curriculum. At this period the buildings would have been built of wattle and daube; later of course they would have been more substantial.

A Scriptorium would have been included in the buildings, and here the Lindisfarne Gospels were written, for Aidan had spent many years learning how to write the script and lettering and also to decorate the pages and mix the colours from local plants.

Trained as he had been for many years by Paulinus the Scribe, now later he would have been just the man to pass on all his learning to this school of young boys, which was the most important teaching that he founded in Northumbria.

Aidan and his twelve disciples were very successful in their ministry to the people, and his missionary work spread across the country.

St Aidan always travelled on foot and, although king Oswald had given him one of his best horses with rich trappings, when he met a beggar asking for support, he gave it to him, much to the king's disappointment and dismay. However when the king chided him for this, saying that had he known that it was to be generously given away, he would not have given Aidan his best horse with all those gorgeous trappings! – Aidan's reply was 'My lord king, surely you can't mean to tell me that that foal of a mare is more important to you than a beggar, the child of God!' On reflection later, Oswald apologised for chiding Aidan.

Some years later, Bede tells us (in chapter 13 of his third book) of the widespread plague, which afflicted the whole of the country including Ireland during Oswald's time. (Bede finished his *History* in 731 so that he was writing less than 90 years after these events took place.)

After Oswald's death, when Bede himself was involved in the healing of a man who was at death's door, he gave him water

which had been soaked in a relic of King Oswald, and the man was healed.

No doubt there were other plagues, which attacked the populations at this period and, without the drugs we possess today, they were probably often fatal.

This can be somewhat confusing, so I give another table of Anglo-Saxon progress:

I quote now from an unnamed ninth century writer of the Chronicle writing of the year 829 he states that: *'King Egbert conquered the kingdom of the Mercians and all that was south of the Humber, and he was the eighth king who was Bretwalda'. It should probably be translated 'Britain ruler', for in the eighth century the position which it denoted could be represented by the style Rex Britanniae. 'Bretwalder' is not a formal style, accurately expressing the position of its bearer; still less is it a deliberate invention founded on historical fact...* This unnamed ninth century compiler of the Chronicle continues ... *'It should not be regarded as a barbarous imitation of imperial dignity, nor can it express what some have read into it, the supremacy of an English overlord over British kings...It is difficult now, and it must have been no less difficult in the ninth century, to explain a custom which gave the title 'ruler of Britain' to the head of a confederacy of the southern English peoples. But it carries at least a dim suggestion of the time when such a confederacy under Aelle of*

*Sussex had been Mons Badonicus.'* <sup>cxv</sup> (I am not at all sure that I understand this quote. Should one take it that *Mons Badonicus* – the great Battle between Arthur and the Anglo-Saxons, which gave Britain peace for thirty years, was in Aelle's time?) It does however seem that there was a period of peace in the early 500s, and this may well have been the peace which King Arthur obtained for the British, also it does appear that many Anglo-Saxons decided to return home during this period, so that would tie up with this evidence. However they patently returned to invade again thereafter.

After Oswald's death his brother Oswy became king, and Bede writes that Oswy was both charming and most handsome. He was to marry Eanfled, the grand-daughter of Queen Bertha, who had

fled with her mother back to Kent under the protection of bishop Paulinus. Eanfled was Oswy's first cousin, being the son of Acha, Edwin's sister, daughter of Aethelfrith. So we see Queen Bertha's Christian influence continuing in conversions to Christianity in Northumbria even later in the third generation of her family. We also need to remind ourselves of the continuing influence of St Martin's legacy both in Iona and Northumbria. However this was soon to change as we shall see, by following Hilda's life story.

St Aidan's influence must have been crucial in the training and upbringing of Hilda <sup>cxvi</sup> and so the Celtic influence was crucial to her background. When she was growing up, she felt the call of the monastic life and asked Aidan if she could go to Brie in France to be trained. In England very little opportunity was evident for girls, as we have seen in Melangell's life and for other girls in Britain. Aidan however was impressed by Hilda's obvious qualities, which he felt could open the way to a lead for women with an obvious calling to such a life. Aidan with his Celtic background therefore was her mentor from an early age. However when Ethelburg took her little daughter to Kent, fleeing with her too was Hilda, who also lived with the family guided by Bishop Paulinus, so that Hilda experienced the influence of the Church of Rome during her upbringing, probably as a teenager, in Kent. However she had been baptised in York together with all Edwin's family. That is to say Hilda could claim that both the Celtic influence under Aidan in York, and later the Roman influence under Paulinus in Kent in exile, were part of her background. So that when she returned to Northumbria some time later, after spending thirteen years at Court in Kent, she had already experienced not only both churches but both royal households intimately at first hand.

She returned to Northumberland where Aidan was her mentor.

Not only did Hilda have this unique background, but also she herself clearly had qualities of leadership and calling. Like many young women of today she had the ability to do great things. She pioneered the way for others who felt the same way as she did. Just as we saw in our day at last week's Synod of the Church of England, women fighting for their rights to be recognised, she must have realised that the battle ahead was going to be tough.

Mindful of old Paulinus's understanding of extraordinary women like St David's mother, and others in Wales who were saints, and totally included in God's work at Caer, Aidan was prepared to drop his own gifts in order to lead the way for others to be fully used in God's plan.

Aidan was an extraordinary man, totally given to the Lord, prepared to be led by the Spirit. He was forgetful of his gifts as a Scribe, leaving the Gospel Book which he had set up at Lindisfarne for others to finish in order to do the Lord's work in the wider field.

*When Penda of Mercia had joined Cadwallon in battles against Edwin and after Edwin's death ravaged Northumbria, what was the effect on Aidan, we do not know; however thirteen years later he was there to receive Hilda when she returned from Kent, now a grown woman. Celtic Christianity was set up again in Northumbria (not in the Roman pattern). The Mercians again invaded Northumbria and King Oswald was killed, and his brother Oswy took over the leadership. Aidan remained in Northumbria – he begged Hilda to return to Northumbria from the East Anglian Court, to organise the religious life for women in her own country.*

***Hilda obeyed Aidan's call, and her life's work now began.***

*Hilda was given a small group of women, but it was soon clear to Aidan that she was ready for wider responsibilities.*

*Hilda was called to be Superior of Hartlepool on the river Wear, where Hiu or Bega had founded a large religious house – Bega was called to found another new house at Tadcaster.*

Bishop Aidan died in AD 651.

*Oswy gave Hilda a parcel of land at Streonshalh on the mouth of the river Esk where Edwin's body was interred. Oswy also entrusted his baby daughter to be brought up as a second Abbess of Whitby after Hilda.*

*In 657 Hilda and a number of sisters from Hartlepool arrived and remained until her death in 680.*

*Caedmon one of Hilda's herdsman became a poet and was notable in spreading the Gospel to the common folk. 'Caedmon's Hymn of*

*Creation.'*

664 The Synod of Whitby

*Presided over by Abbess Hilda.* <sup>cxvii</sup>

*This was called to decide whether Celtic or Roman practice was to be followed in the Church. It was all one Christian Faith but practical issues were decided, and the date of Easter. Hilda was a Celt, but King Oswy and his Queen both worshiped in different traditions.*

680 *Hilda died after a long illness, which lasted over the final 6* <sup>cxviii</sup> *years of her life.*

Before he died Aidan advised Hilda to choose that the Northumbrian Church should go over to Rome. In spite of having been a Celt all his life, the security offered by the Church of Rome was important. Hilda herself had spent many years at the court in Kent, which had after all been founded by St Augustine, so that she herself had experienced both Roman and Celtic foundations personally. Also St Peter founded the Church of Rome, and he held the keys to heaven! Whereas the Celtic Church was founded by St John! This was a joke which Queen Eanfled's husband King Oswy made at the time of the Whitby conference! *Since as we know the Welsh Celtic church had close contacts with the church in Rome, it does seem that the Saxons were making a trauma about nothing.*

The Church of Northumbria clearly owed its founding to Queen Bertha and her family, and ultimately to the influence of St Martin all those years before. Queen Bertha's family are buried at Whitby.

## Templeton Centre to explore character

by Ed Thornton

THE latest discoveries of science are “strikingly consistent” with belief in the Trinity, the Revd Dr John Polkinghorne said last Friday.

Speaking at an event organised by the John Templeton Foundation at the British Academy, Dr Polkinghorne, who is an Anglican priest and a former professor of mathematical physics, said: “Recently there has been a considerable revival concerned with the issue of Trinitarian thinking simply within systematic theology itself. This surely has relevance to science’s discovery of the presence of a widespread degree of relationality present in the physical world. One of the most remarkable instances of relationality is the phenomena of quantum entanglement.”

Dr Polkinghorne said that he did not “pretend that quantum entanglement justifies Trinitarian theology . . . but one might expect that creation would exhibit some pale reflection of the nature of its creator”.

Last month, the University of Birmingham announced that it had been given “a multi-million pound award” by the Templeton Foundation “to support the first UK centre dedicated to research into the character, values, and virtues that shape UK society”.

A statement from the university said that the Jubilee Centre for Character and Values would carry out research projects covering “all areas of British society: from character education in schools, to examining the values that motivate professionals such as teachers, lawyers, and doctors, as well as those in the media, finance industries, and civil service.”

The director of the new centre, Professor James Arthur, said: “In the aftermath of the August 2011 riots, there have been many calls for the renewal of public and private virtues. As a country we appear to want to change people for the better and so improve the quality of public life. However, there is very little definition of what these changes might be and how they might be made.

“The Jubilee Centre will not simply research past and present attitudes to character, but help to develop new knowledge and understanding of character that will benefit civil society.”



Whitby Whitsun: sisters from St Hilda's Priory joined 1000 others at a Pentecost service in Whitby Abbey with the Archbishop of York a fortnight ago

## Chapter Thirteen

### The death of Saint Aidan, 651 AD.

Bede, as the faithful historian of the time and one which we can trust as giving posterity a faithful record of events, gives us a whole chapter on St Aidan's death.

It has always seemed curious to me that Aidan, who must have realised that he was nearing the end of his earthly journey, chose to die on the mainland and not at his home in Lindisfarne. King Oswald had given him another cell on the mainland, from which to set out on his missionary journeys, and with it a small church at Bamburgh, whence it was that Aidan would plan and undertake his missionary journeys. This humble saint chose to die as he had lived, fully in harness as a faithful servant of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Given that he was aware of his immanent death (in August 651), one would have thought that Aidan would have wished to die in his bed on the island of Lindisfarne; instead he chose to stay 'in harness' at Bamburgh church. I have given this considerable thought and come to the conclusion that rather than drawing attention to the work in the Scriptorium at Lindisfarne, where he had trained scholars to continue whilst he went on his preaching tours, ministering to the people, which he felt was even more important, he perhaps decided that his funeral was a separate matter, and the Scriptorium should be left in peace, to continue its precious work.

The truth was that Aidan was never the same man after the death of Oswald. He had known Oswald since he was a boy, sent to Iona for protection when he was too young to be a king. It was on Iona that Oswald became a Christian, which may also have been Aidan's doing. When Oswald became King of Northumbria, the whole country became Christian; Oswald had

sent for Aidan to evangelise his people and we have seen how his preaching and influence there was profound; the whole country followed as Aidan, accompanied by Oswald, who translated for Aidan (who knew no Anglo-Saxon), as he went on his preaching journeys throughout the country, it was a magnificent partnership. Aidan must have been shattered at Oswald's death at the age of thirty-eight. Not only had Oswald been nurtured on the island of

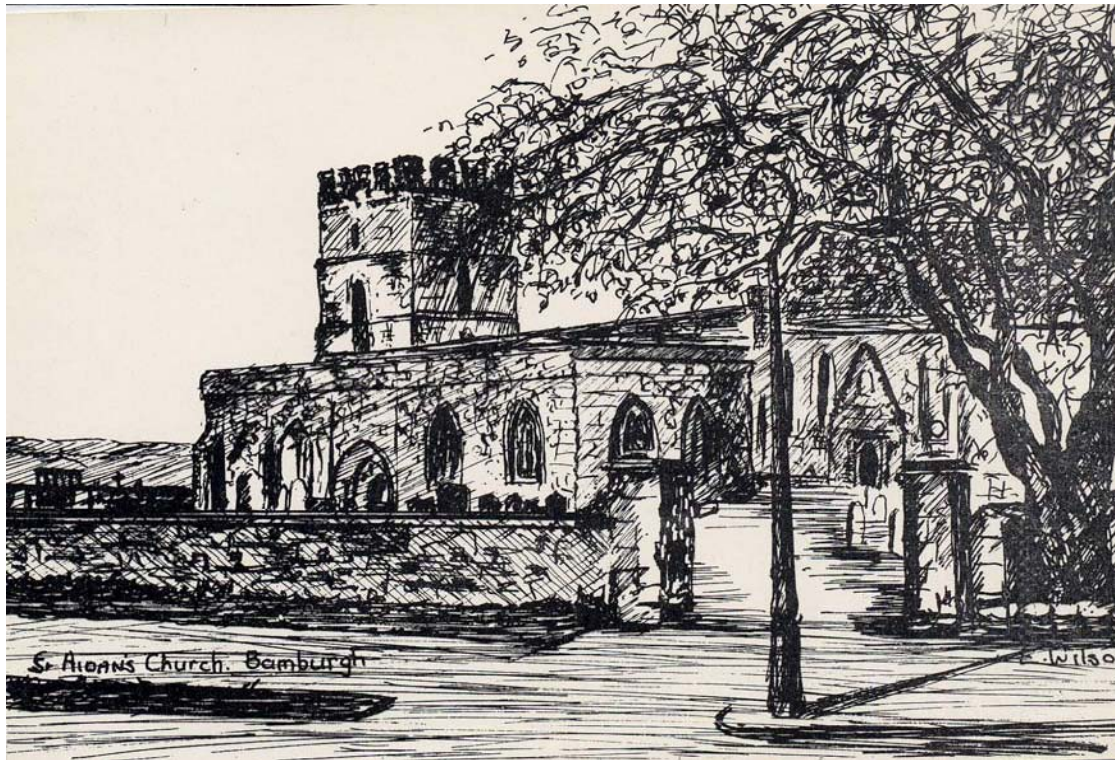


Iona since he was a boy, but when he became king of Northumbria it was Oswald who called for Aidan to join him there to convert his Saxon people. Obviously

this activity had to come to an end, for without Oswald to translate Aidan's preaching to his subjects, of course the AngloSaxon's questions to Aidan were impossible for Aidan to deal with now. It was a sudden and bitter end.

It is difficult to judge Aidan's age when he died, for, although he was probably considerably younger than Teilo and Dewi, he was a close friend of both, and we surmise that they probably died towards the end of the sixth century; but since we have a date for Aidan's death in 651, he could hardly have been fifty years younger than Teilo and Dewi!

Bede tells us that Aidan had lived in Northumbria for seventeen years helping King Oswald, and we read of several miracles for which Aidan was responsible during that time. Oswald was killed in battle, his head and his hand were cut off from his body, and the hand showed no sign of decay, preserved in a silver shrine in St Peter's church in the royal city of Bamburgh. He had ruled for nine years and Aidan only lived for twelve days after the murder of Oswald, the king he loved. Aidan died after a short illness in the church at Bamburgh, leaning against a buttress. People had erected a tent for him which they fastened to the buttress, *so that he breathed his last, leaning against the buttress which supported the church on the outside. He died on August 31<sup>st</sup> and his body was shortly afterwards translated to the island of Lindisfarne and buried in the cemetery of the brethren.*



“Aidan was the Apostle of England” and the Apostle of the Northumbrians, at a time when Northumbria was the greatest of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms. Printed by How & Blackhall, 77 Marygate, Berwickupon-Tweed (0289) 307553. ‘Bamburgh Church’ in this picture.

Finan, was sent from Iona monastery to succeed Aidan in the bishopric at Lindisfarne.

Canon Kate Tristran had been Vicar for thirty years at Lindisfarne, when we visited in 1994. She explained that Eadfrith wrote the main text of the Gospels in script known as insular majuscule which was developed in early Christian Ireland, and spread to Iona, as Janet Backhouse writes in her book on *The Lindisfarne Gospels*. I suggest that it may have been started earlier by St Aidan, but clearly his missionary work was of even greater concern to him as we have noted.

After the death of Aidan the Mercians under Penda moved in; they decided to attack Bamburgh, where Aidan had died, and were busy stacking up fodder for an enormous bonfire of the capital city; however the monks at Lindisfarne watching this prayed and the wind changed direction, turning the fire against Penda and his troops who fled. However at a later time they tried again and this

time they were more successful and the fire destroyed the capital city. But, although the church was burnt down, curiously the outside beam, against which St Aidan had leant whilst he was dying, was left standing and untouched.

We will learn much more about St Aidan from Rhygyfach in our last chapter.

## Chapter Fourteen

### Brochwel Ysgythrog of Powys, North Wales at Pengwern (Old St Chads) and the story of Melangell c550.

Prince Brochwel Ysgythrog was a ruler in Powys from Pengwern (formerly old St Chads at this time), he had his royal seat at Shrewsbury during the period that Penda was conquering Mercia.

We visited Melangell's shrine whilst on a tour of Roman remains in north Wales with the Cambrian Archaeologists.

Women begin to take their place in history as founders of Abbeys as they became Christians in this period. Other women, fleeing from unwelcome marriages to pagan warriors, are discovered at this time turning to prayer, such as 7<sup>th</sup> century St Winifred whose well in north Wales has been known to be a site of healing since medieval times. St Bees is another such place, founded in Viking times by a holy Irish girl Bega, fleeing from Ireland across the Irish sea - or another site, Pennant Melangell, which is a place of pilgrimage in north Wales, near Oswestry.

We call these 'thin places' where one can be close to God, conscious of the nearby Presence of the Holy Spirit. There is a legend for instance about this last place which we visited with the Cambrian Archaeologists. We are told that Prince Brochwel Ysgythrog was out hunting with his horses and his dogs, when he came to a sudden stop, for his dogs who had been chasing a hare would go no further. He came upon a young girl who was praying by a thorn bush in this narrow valley. It turned out that the hare which they had been chasing was hiding under the girl's skirt. The terrified hare was hiding under her skirt for protection from the dogs, who stood as though frozen seeing Melangell praying on her knees. So the prince asked her what she was doing there; she explained she was running away from an unwelcome marriage to an Irish prince, and wanted to live as a Christian close to God. Brochwel was so impressed with her holiness that the prince gave her the whole of this valley in which to build a church, and it has been a place of worship to this day.

The prince belongs to the history we are looking at in this period, where places of healing and prayer in our country are very

precious to us. There were very few Christian convents for women at this period in Britain, Brie in France being the nearest exception for women. Queen Bertha's family pioneered this movement in England, but of course we know of other brilliant work in Wales, such as the monastic movement pioneered by Dubricius, which trained so many men, but also a few women, and others of his generation. Also in Brychan's family we have already noted many female pioneers in Wales, his daughter Tydfil being a martyr for her faith remembered at Merthyr Tydfil. Also we know that Paul Aurelian's sister who travelled with him from Llandoverly to Cornwall also founded a convent there by the sea. We should not forget also that old Paulinus had at least two women in his inner group of students, St David's mother Non and her sister Wen.<sup>cxix</sup>

Prince Brochwel was so impressed with the girl and her story, that he gave her the valley in perpetuity. She built a small church there, where others could come for sanctuary. This shrine has been lovingly restored and the place has an aura of peace and holiness even today.

In Wales we have places which we call 'thin places' where heaven seems very close – the little church which holds Melangell's remains today in a simple grave has been a place of worship ever since.

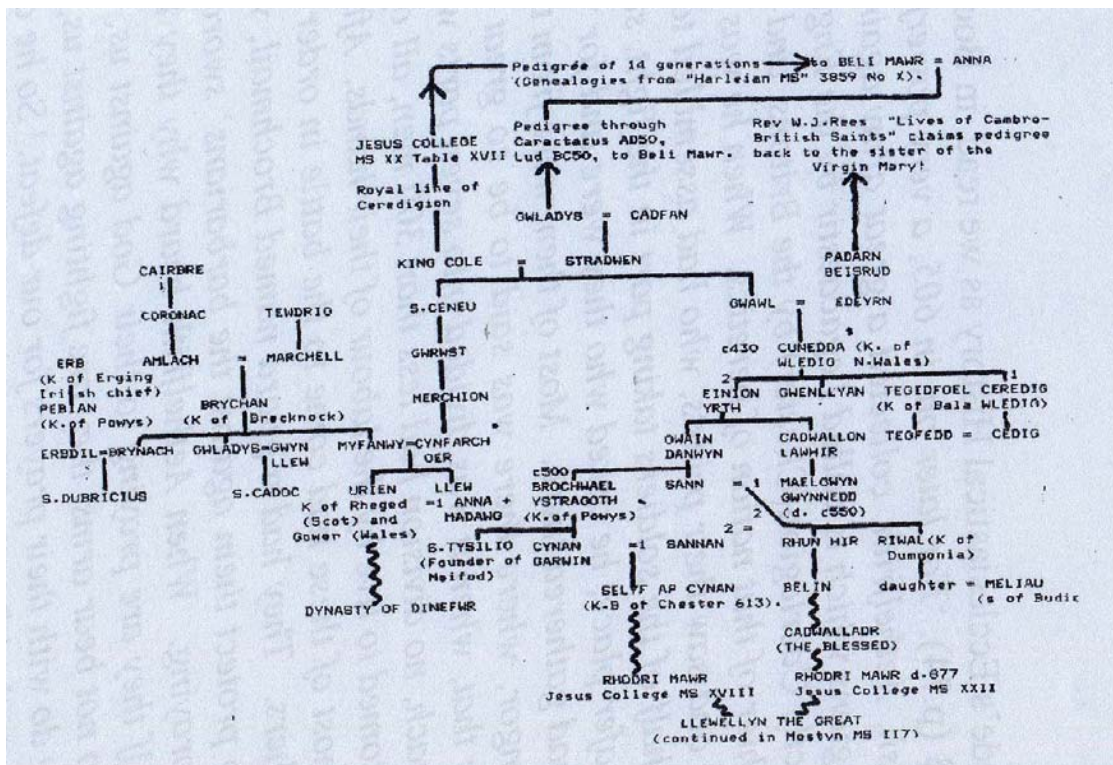
The princess is named Melangell, and the place is called Penant Melangell where she is buried under a simple stone. (Curiously there is also a Byzantine shrine in the church). But the atmosphere one feels as one goes through the gate, to enter the churchyard, can be cut with a knife, for here heaven seems really close – only a simple step away.

Prince Brochwel Ysgythrog was a ruler in Powys from Pengwern (formerly old St Chads at this time 605), he had his royal seat at Shrewsbury during the period that Penda was conquering Mercia. His family tree is on the next page. Our man

**Brochwel Ysgythrog** is not the same man, as **Brochmail Ystragoth** mentioned by Bede as having been at the battle of Chester where the Anglo-Saxons fought the British. 'The Dictionary of Welsh Biography' says he seems totally out of

character. The names are similar and possibly Bede mistook the name 'Brochmail' for Brockwel Ysgythrog.

Today one may visit Penant Melangell in this holy hidden valley where the church is open on certain days by appointment



## Chapter Fifteen

### Northumbria King Edwin and Ethelburga Followed by Oswald and Oswy. Then Mercia.

It is an interesting point that, although Oswy was not a Christian until he married his wife, he was the king who presided over the Synod of Whitby, and thus was responsible for separating the English church from the Celtic church and the jurisdiction of the Pope (on St Aidan's advice). Here we remind ourselves that this is just a result of his marriage to Queen Bertha's granddaughter. However it was a good idea to have Papal control and the good thing was that it brought peace and organisation which the church needed.

The marriage of Penda's son Paeda to Oswy's daughter Alhflaed was the continuation of Queen Bertha's influence on the next kingdom during the following period. Mercia enlarged its power and control over middle England; creeping further and further west the Anglo-Saxons reached the borders of Wales and into Dumnonia.

I attended a celebration of Dr Raleigh Radford's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with a conference at Exeter, where I met Susan Pearce and bought her book on Dumnonia.<sup>cxxi</sup> Her study of Devon and Cornwall is fascinating, into the kingdom of King Alfred some years after our period.

Fighting in Penda's force was Cadwallon, who was determined to avenge both his father Cadfan's wonderful protection of Edwin during his youth, and Edwin's cynical taking of all the territory belonging to Cadfan's heirs. Cadfan's own rightful inheritance had been stolen from him by his foster brother Edwin. However Cadwallon became wounded, and had to withdraw from the fighting. He was not a committed Christian at this time, however he made up his mind to make his pilgrimage to Rome, to be baptised by the Pope in the tradition of some of his noble forebears. He therefore set out for Rome, leaving Penda's army and on reaching Rome, he placed himself under the Pope's guidance and became baptised. However his injuries eventually overtook him, and he died and was buried in Rome still wearing

his baptismal robes. It would be good to see if we could discover the graves of these noble Welshmen; however one would expect that after all this time perhaps all can now be forgotten.



## MERCIA



Map by Professor William Rees From Northumberland we move to Middle England during the same period during the Saxon invasion.

Lindisfarne still contained its Scriptorium, however Chad and Cedd had been sent by Aidan to study for a while in Ireland, and that study may well have included the work of Irish scholars and illustrators in the scriptoria also. Bede tells us how Aidan's training in the mission field was thoroughly ingrained in the Celtic style of simplicity and holiness. Aidan believed in working close to the people and walking alongside those to whom he was sent to teach and preach in the mission field. Later we hear how Chad also preferred to walk on his long journeys in the countryside, in order to meet the people and talk to them individually. Cedd did not stay long in the midlands, for he was recalled to become bishop of the East Saxons, and in 654 he built a monastery at

cxxii

Lastingham in the Yorkshire moors. Chad also was called to be a bishop and he built his cathedral in Lichfield in 669. He became the first bishop to the Mercians in the time of King Oswy (Oswiu) until his death in 672. Of the four brothers two became bishops and the other two became priests in King Oswy's time. So we see Queen Bertha's influence carried on in Mercia also, since her grand daughter Queen Eanfled married King Oswy, and their daughter, (Queen Bertha's great grand daughter Alhflaed) married

cxxiii

Paeda, the son of the Mercian King Penda. It may have been

due to this marriage that Penda's son Paeda influenced his father, originally against Christianity, to change and allow the conversion of Mercia to begin.

*In 653 Chad and his brother Cedd, came over from Ireland to  
begin this work.*<sup>cxxiv</sup>

However there was an outbreak of the plague some years later in 664, and when Cedd returned from a missionary journey to his monastery of Lastingham he found that his brother Cynebil had caught the plague, which Cedd also caught. He sent a message to his brother Chad asking him to come to Lastingham to take his place in the monastery, which Chad hurriedly did. When he arrived he found both his brothers had died, to be followed by many more. One little boy alone had survived in the monastery, Bede tells us that Chad prayed to God that the child could be saved, and God answered his prayers.

This was the time when Theodore was Archbishop of Canterbury. Theodore had been appointed to make many reforms in the church, and Wulfhere was the Christian king of Mercia. Theodore made Chad the first Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Mercia, at first he was based at Repton, but then later Theodore decided that he should move to Lichfield, where Chad built himself a house near the church with a pool of water which was used for baptism close by. However Chad was only in residence there for three years when he died of the plague. Bede tells us that after his death miracles of healing were reported at his tomb, and he is venerated as a saint.

However the Welsh continued their raids on the invaders, until eventually King Offa decided that something had to be done to control the situation. Offa's decision was to dig an enormous dyke stretching from sea to sea, to keep the Welsh out of Mercia, this is described by Michael Wood in his book on the period<sup>cxxv</sup> in which he gives a very colourful account of the building of this dyke. Sections of the dyke are still present after all this time. No one seems bothered with the fact that the country actually belonged to the people they were trying to keep out.

When I started exploring the Christian history of Wales and the Anglo-Saxon period, I was keen to find out what actually did

happen – it has left me deeply impressed with the faithfulness of the two people who were so firmly committed to the work that they seriously took on - and how the task, was faithfully followed through to the end – namely that of St Martin of Tours and Queen Bertha. I found it amazing that because their faith was so strong their influence quietly carried on through most daunting and dangerous times, and how God honoured their faith in Him.

After the Synod of Whitby decided that the Roman church should prevail in England in 664, various difficulties arose until

in 669 King Eorcenbert and his successor, Egbert, and King Oswy decided to send Widheard to Rome to be consecrated by the Pope. Widheard died before he could return and the Pope chose Theodore of Tarsus to be Archbishop. Theodore spent the next twenty years organising the church of England as Archbishop of Canterbury. He set up the Diocesan system giving the non-monastic churches a framework. Then a series of plagues killed many of the new clergy and some areas reverted to paganism.<sup>cxxvi</sup>

The period we are now considering, that is to say the conquest of England by Penda took place, Penda's son Paeda married Queen Bertha's great grand-daughter Alhflaed and the Christian influence was to continue in Mercia. Their marriage lasted for some twenty-five years until she found herself a widow. Since women are hardly mentioned in history it is difficult to find accurate mention of them in history books and so I have had a problem discovering the history of this particular time. However it seems most likely that Queen Alhflaed retired to Whitby Abbey as a widow, remembering that her father had promised that she would be dedicated to the Lord at her birth.

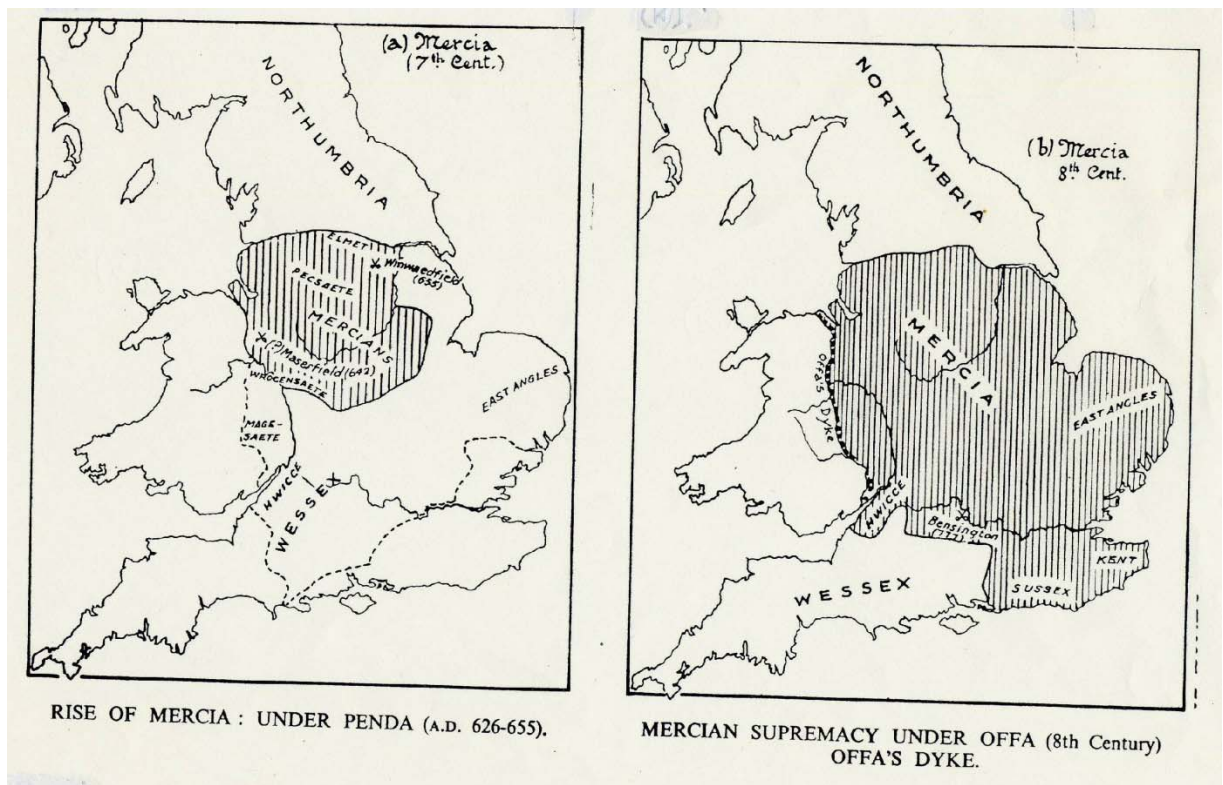
The next invaders were the Danes who, under Guthrum settled in the east of Britain. King Alfred continued to defend the country and as ever he was based at Athelney near the Bristol Channel. He converted Guthrum to Christianity and eventually Alfred becoming his godfather decided that Guthrum should share the country, so that he and Guthrum made peace between themselves and Alfred decided to keep London and the south, while Guthrum ruled in the north east. Then the Vikings appeared around the coasts pillaging and settling in Ireland and the northern islands and

Lindisfarne which they ravaged.

It is hard to believe that in spite of all this Alfred had time to translate Bede's history and found schools for his sons and also universities – Oxford was founded by Alfred for instance.

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The Welsh historian, Professor William Rees produced a series of maps of this period.



## Chapter Sixteen

### King Alfred the Great reigned from AD 871- 899

The sickening story of conquest and killing and landgrabbing continues. After the Saxons came the Danes; after the Danes came the Vikings; pillaging and stealing continued as though these foreigners all had a right to take, leaving destruction behind them. Both Bede and Gildas were quite correct when they exclaimed in their books how beautiful this country was, and how it drew all these foreigners to its beauty. In fact it still does attract people from far away, until all our roads are choked and we need to build more and more houses, or put people high off the good ground into flats, to accommodate this ever expanding populace.

Perhaps I have gone too far in my condemnation, for we all know the richness of the variety of people around us – we have now become one world, and the value of this can also be felt in our schools, so that instead of autocracy we have democracy and every person is valued and counts. That is what we have gained. For the purposes of this history we will now skip from the Anglo-Saxon Northumbrian ascendancy to the time of King Alfred in the 870's.

### Alfred the Great, King of the West Saxons 871-899.

*Alfred's father was King Ethelwulf King of the West Wessex Saxons; his mother Osnaburga was illiterate and died when he was only five years old. Alfred had three older brethren and there is a story that their mother showed them a manuscript of Saxon poetry and promised to give this manuscript to the first one who could repeat the verses to her. We are told that Alfred asked a scholar to help by reading the verses out loud to him. By listening attentively he learned them by heart and won the prize! His mother died whilst he was still five. At this early age, in 853, his father sent Alfred to Rome – a long and dangerous journey – where he was blessed by the Pope. He returned home, but apparently he did not learn to read until he was twelve, and by the age of eighteen two of his elder brothers had died, and together with his elder brother King Ethelred he fought against the Danes. He married in 868, and by 871 his remaining brother died after fighting nine major battles, leaving two young sons.*

Alfred was chosen King by the Witan (the group of nobles who made up a Council); by this time he had reached the age of twenty-three having had five years of active service commanding the army. He was now King of Wessex and Commander-in-chief of the army, until in the winter of 877-8 the Danes attacked, and Alfred went into hiding until Easter with a few followers who built a fort at Athelney; then at Easter he came out of hiding and made himself known to the people, to their immense joy; so they rallied round him and fought the battle of Ethandune to win a brilliant victory. He was a deeply committed Christian and he made thirty of the defeated Danes Christians, including their commander Guthrun, with whom Alfred made a treaty of peace, and settlement with all Danes.

But in spite of taking London Alfred continued to defend his country throughout his reign, until he died c 899 when he was in his early fifties. He was buried at Winchester.<sup>cxxvii</sup>

Even today we still call him 'Alfred the Great,' and indeed he was! Not only did he train an efficient Army, which covered the whole country, but he also commanded an effective Navy.

On land he divided the community of each hamlet into half, so that at any one time half of all the men were working at home, while the other half were drafted into the army. In other words the whole of England was continually defended on land. And he built walls around the towns for protection, while in London he restored parts of the city, which had become dilapidated; this security meant that towns grew both in size and wealth.

At sea he built a fleet of the most up to date ships which he designed himself, to defend the waters against the Vikings who were pillaging and plundering the monasteries round the coasts, and Lindisfarne and especially in Wales, so that many ancient treasures were stolen. Added to his amazing organising ability,<sup>th</sup> Alfred had time to be a scholar. Importantly in his 45<sup>th</sup> year he sent for Asser, a Welsh monk from St Davids, to revive the learning at his court. Asser belonged to a family of renowned learned priests, whose father was Archbishop of Wales living in St David's in Pembrokeshire.

It was Asser who revealed to King Alfred the Christian history of Wales, which was a revelation to the King and in fact to us today. I have included part of this in my last chapter.

Alfred and Asser shared many things in common at a deeper level - Asser taught Alfred to read Latin. After which Alfred himself translated Pope Gregory's history on Pastoral Care, and then Alfred translated the Bible from the Latin, to the Anglo-Saxon both the Old and New Testaments, as a gift and a blessing to his people.

Alfred's 'Life' was written by Asser, whom he persuaded to stay at his court in Wessex for six months. He made him Bishop of Sherborne nearby, and Asser had a house there – and Alfred learned Augustine's teaching that he had given which he taught Guthrun:

- 1) *A man must be taught first about the immortality of the soul, the future life, rewards for good and evil, and both kinds of eternity.*
- 2) *Then he must be told the particular sins for which he must suffer eternal punishment with Satan, and good deeds for which he may enjoy everlasting glory with Christ.*
- 3) *The belief in the Holy Trinity must be carefully taught.*
- 4) *The advent of the son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to save mankind, must be expounded, with the mystery of His passion, the truth of the resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and his coming to judge all nations.*

He founded a school for his sons to learn to read and write, and he founded Oxford University. He revived the system of Laws, trial by jury and hanged 44 judges for giving unfair judgements.

He divided the day into three parts – one for running the kingdom, one for physical exercise and the third for sleep.

Perhaps for our purposes, the greatest result for us was when Alfred called for the scholar Asser who lived at St Davids, to come to Athelney where he made him a bishop and gave him a residence close by King Alfred himself. If this had not happened all the history of the Welsh saints in St Davids time – our Celtic saints – would have been lost for posterity. There would have been Dark Ages indeed.

I quote this revelation by Asser in the next chapter.

## Chapter Seventeen

### Aidan and St David – Rhigyfach.

In *Rhigyfach's Life of St David*, translated by J.W.James, in the Basic Mid Twelfth-Century Latin Text, published on behalf of the Board of Celtic Studies UWP Cardiff 1967, we read that

*Aidan is also included as one of old Paulinus's pupils, along with David and Teilo, at a place which appears to be Whitland, but was probably Maes Llanurthwal* <sup>cxxviii</sup>. The mention of Aidan here is particularly interesting, because we do have a firm date for his death from Bede, (AD 651), giving us a context for his contemporaries.

*Rhigyfach's original manuscript was written c.1095. He was the eldest son of Sulien, Bishop of St David's from 1072-1078 and from 1080-1085. Sulien tutored King Alfred the Great, and also taught him Latin, the father Sulien and his sons all being celebrated for their learning.*

Rhigyfach tells us that Saint Aidan was trained as a Scribe by old Saint Paulinus at Maesllanurthwal Monastery pre-547AD. Rhigyfach also tells us that he had returned home to Ireland, when one day he was copying a Gospel Book recently shipped over from Rome to Ireland; he was reprimanded by one of his superiors and, as a punishment, Aidan was banished to Iona where Saint Cuthbert was in charge. No doubt Aidan was allowed to carry on developing his skills as a Scribe there. It was common practice that missionary monks copied the Scriptures for their own use when they set out on missionary journeys, this copy being strapped to their back for use when they went out preaching. Cuthbert followed Aidan after his death as Abbot of Lindisfarne, where no doubt Cuthbert also continued to encourage the work of the scriptorium in Lindisfarne.

But clearly Aidan's work shows an affinity with the Gospel Book, written by old Paulinus in his Scriptorium at Caio, <sup>cxxix</sup> where Aidan was trained. We know also that he was copying a book from Rome, whilst still in Ireland; it is possible Cuthbert may even have encouraged him in this enterprise whilst he was with him in Iona. No doubt this could have enabled Aidan to begin to create



the Lindisfarne Gospel Book. Could this perhaps account for some certain affinity with Paulinus's earlier Gospel Book, noticeable in the Cross-Carpet page and Initial page on page 66, of Janet Backhouse's book on the Lichfield Gospels?<sup>cxxx</sup> It would mean that when he eventually arrived at Lindisfarne, it would explain how he had the experience to set up his own Scriptorium there. Clearly much of the Lindisfarne Gospels is quite different in style, since Aidan, we read, felt drawn to become more involved in Ministry, leaving others to take over the work on the Gospel Book.

### Dewi Sant or St David, St Teilo and St Aidan

Rhigyfach's 'Life of St. David' – written in the 12<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup>) century?

(Ch. 3). 'Patrick foresaw Dewi's birth, but they did not meet; it was thirty years before Dewi was born.'<sup>cxxxix</sup>

(Ch.8). 'Dewi was raised at a place which is called Vetus Rubus, and grew up full of grace, and pleasing to behold. There he was taught his letters, and learned the Church practices.'

(Ch.9). '...and there he was ordained, and raised to the dignity of a priest.'

(Ch.10). 'He then left that place, and went to Paulinus, a disciple of St Germanus and a teacher, who on an island<sup>cxxxii</sup> led a life pleasing to God... The Scribe taught David the three forms of reading, until he became a scribe.'<sup>cxxxiii</sup>

(Ch.11). 'Now, it so happened that the same Paulinus was at that time troubled with his eyes (moreover, holy Dewi remained there many years, reading and fully assimilating what he read), and it was arranged that the pupils should assemble together, in order that, as their master called them, they should each one separately bless his eyes and touch them, making the Sign of the Cross upon them, so that he should be made well by their prayer and blessing.'<sup>cxxxiv</sup>

After the other pupils had arisen in turn, and had touched the master's eyes, signing them with the sign of the Cross, holy Dewi was asked to touch the master's eyes, but he said in reply, 'I have not hitherto looked on my master's face. For it is ten years since I

have been here reading with him, nevertheless I do not know his countenance.’ Overwhelmed with shyness and modesty, he had avoided looking on his master’s face. His master then said to him; ‘Raise your hand and touch my eyes without looking, and I shall be healed. This done, the light of day was clearly revealed to him, darkness was driven from his eyes, and the master received that sight of which he had been deprived. Thanks are then rendered to God, and holy Dewi is indeed praised and blessed by them, one and all.’

(Ch.12). “No long time after, an angel appeared to Paulinus and said, ‘It is time that Dewi, since he has doubled his talents by putting them to good use, should not consign the talent of wisdom, entrusted to him to the earth ...He became all things to all men.’ (Dewi was made Archbishop of Wales here in Llandewi Brefi.)

(Ch.13). “He (Dewi) first reached Glastonbury, and built a church; at Bath...” in all he founded twelve monasteries in that area. (It is interesting for us, so many years later, to be told that both Saint Patrick and Saint David wanted to be buried at Glastonbury. So much could be said about this, however we had better not digress here).

(Ch.15). “Now, one day, there came to him his three most faithful disciples, namely Aidan, Eluid (Teilo) and Ismael (Teilo’s sister’s son).”

(Ch.32). “Hearing the report of his good fame, kings and princes of the world abandoned their dominions and sought his monastery. It happened that Constantine (Aurelianus), King of Cornwall, bowed his proud head, previously unbowed, in lowly obedience to his father’s call; and there he lived long in faithful submission, until at length, departing for another distant land, he built a monastery there.” (This was a brother to King Perphirius and Uther Pendragon, his kingdoms in fact being both Devon and Cornwall. He eventually went to live in Ireland. (Ch.35). “Another time, his faithful disciple the holy Aidan by chance was out of doors reading, to confirm the meaning of a doctrine, when the prior of the monastery appeared and commanded him to take two oxen, and to go and convey timber from the valley, for the wood was a long way off. But Aidan, the disciple, the more speedily to

obey the command, did not even pause to close the book. During the journey, such a downpour of rain came on suddenly that the ditches ran with water. The journey ended and the oxen released from labour, he went to the place where he had left his book and found it still open in the same manner, but uninjured by the rain. When the brethren heard this, they praised both the Father's graciousness and the disciple's humility."

(Ch.36). "Now St Aidan completed his studies and, his virtues perfected and his faults suppressed to the degree of purity, he went to Ireland, where he lived a most holy life."

(Ch.37). "One Easter eve, as he was most intently engaged in prayer, an angel appeared to him and said: 'Do you know that poison will be set before the holy saint Dewi, namely your father, tomorrow at dinner, by some of the brethren?' 'No', said Saint Aidan in reply, 'I do not know it.' Aidan was in Ireland and Dewi in Wales; however the angel told Aidan to send his fellow disciple Scuthinus to Wales immediately..."

(Ch.38). 'Scuthinus reached Dewi's monastery and told him of the plot. The Easter ceremonies had now ended; Dewi and the monks all sat down to dinner; the poisoned bread was put on the table (both the cook and another were parties to the plot); the holy father blessed the bread and divided it into three portions; one part he gave to the dog and another to a crow and they died; the third part he ate himself after blessing it. They all kept their eyes on him for about three hours, expecting him to die, but no sign of the deadly poison affected him.'

(Ch.41). Dewi, Teilo and Padarn now go to Jerusalem, where they are ordained bishops by the Patriarch there. In short, to make it clear from the beginning, this was the time when Wales, being cut off from the land of Europe, felt obliged to turn to her seafaring traditions, and to contact both Jerusalem and Constantinople. Saint David, together with Saint Teilo and Saint Padarn, were consecrated Bishops at Jerusalem, but in truth only at some later date would Rome declare David a Saint; the pallium would not be from Rome but from Jerusalem.

#### The Synod of Llandewi Brevi.

(Ch.49). "The Synod of Llandewi Brevi was called in AD 545 to

put down the Pelagian heresy”<sup>cxxxv</sup> ... (A great crisis had arisen, for they fear that the people would return home with the heresy uncrushed). “Then arose one of the bishops, named Paulinus, with whom aforetime holy Dewi the bishop had studied; ‘There is one,’ he said, ‘who has been made bishop by the Patriarch, who has not attended our synod; a man of eloquence, full of grace, experienced in religion, an associate of angels, a man to be loved, attractive in countenance, magnificent in appearance, six feet in stature. Him I advise you to summon here.’ ”

(Ch.50). “Messengers were sent three times to summon Dewi. Finally the holiest and most upright men are sent, Daniel and Dubricius... they arrive and refuse to eat anything offered in Dewi’s monastery, unless he agrees to come to the synod with them.”

(Ch.51). ‘They agree and set out with Dewi, who performs a miracle on the journey.’

(Ch.52). ‘They arrive at the synod. Dewi preaches and converts the crowd. Dewi performs another miracle.’

(Ch.53). ‘Dewi is acclaimed Archbishop of the entire British race.’ (Because Dewi confronted the heresy of Pelagianism.)

(Ch.54). “The heresy is expelled at the ‘Synod of Victory’, at which a number of bishops from many places attend.”

Aidan came from Ireland, and caused trouble on his return, by copying a precious manuscript book in the monastery there, which had come from Rome. As a punishment he was exiled to Iona. From Iona he was sent to Lindisfarne after a previous monk had had to return to Iona. Aidan probably had his own scriptorium there in Lindisfarne also. Is it possible that Aidan himself was the author of the Book of Lindisfarne, just as Paulinus the Scribe was the author of the Llandeilo Gospel Book? In which case we need to reconsider the date of these two Books, which may be somewhat earlier than we originally supposed. However, although Janet Backhouse at the British Library made some comparisons in Chapter 8 of her book on the Lindisfarne Gospels, it is clear that there are obvious differences

cxxxvi

also.

The Venerable Bede clearly had great admiration for Saint Aidan (with the exception of his stance on the date of Easter!) and has given us a full account of him which is very helpful. We hear of Aidan in Rhigyfach's 'Life of St David', written in the twelfth century in Latin, which also mentions that David and Teilo were studying together with Aidan under 'Paulinus the Scribe' at Maes Llanurthwal near those gold mines. Rhigyfach writes at length a story about Aidan during his stay with Paulinus.

(Ch 66 and 67). Dewi's death.

See:- Professor Bowen's handwritten talk given to St David's Cathedral shortly before he died – which he gave to me. <sup>cxxxvii</sup>

Professor Bowen writes:- 'Apart from a few early references to his name and to his monastery, all we know about St David comes from Rhigyfach's *Life of St David*..' <sup>cxxxviii</sup>

Rhigyfach was the eldest son of Sulien, bishop of St David's from 1070-1078, and from 1080-1085. The 'Life of St David' was written in Latin in the year 1095 – that is some five hundred years after the Saint lived. Before we examine the all important work of Rhigyfach, we should glance briefly at some of the earliest references to Dewi which are known to have been made before Rhigyfach's work was written. Three come from Ireland; the earliest is considered to be the reference in the famous *Catalogue of the Saints of Ireland*, which was once thought to be compiled about 730 AD, but modern research is inclined to give it a later date in the ninth or even the early tenth century. In it we are told that Irish monks received the Order of Service from Saints Dewi, Gildas and Docus of Wales. Belonging to much the same period <sup>st</sup> is the reference to one *David Cille Muni* under March 1 in the Irish *Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*. This work is thought to date from the middle of the eighth century. Another early reference comes from a Breton work, <sup>cxxxix</sup> when a monk named Gourmonoc in the Abbey of Landevennec in Brittany wrote a *Life of St Paul de Leon* in 884. In this work there are several references to Wales and the Welsh Saints, for example, he tells us that David was a pupil of St Illtud at Llantwit Major, but this is considered doubtful. More important is the reference in this work to David

being nicknamed ‘Aquaticus’ (*Dyfrwr*) because he lived on bread, vegetables and water alone.

Rhigyfach shows that St David was no longer with St Paulinus at Maesllanurthwal in 545 when the Synod of Llandewi Felfry was called to put down Pelagianism. Dewi Sant was too busy to leave his own monastery at St David’s. However when at last he did come, he was asked to bless his old master Paulinus, who had not quite finished his work on the manuscript Book, which we all know, for Paulinus was losing his sight and was clearly an old man. However David was not old and was fully occupied at his church. Then again we note from Rhigyfach that St Aidan was much younger than David and stayed on at Maesllanurthwal, when all his friends had left and he was called to help at the monastery to gather wood for the fire.

In another passage, after St Aidan had returned to his home in Ireland, he had a dream that St David was going to be poisoned; he had to act quickly and sent another monk to go over the sea and support David, whose life was mysteriously saved by his faith and prayer. So clearly David and Aidan were good friends in spite of their age difference, although it obviously was not as much as fifty!

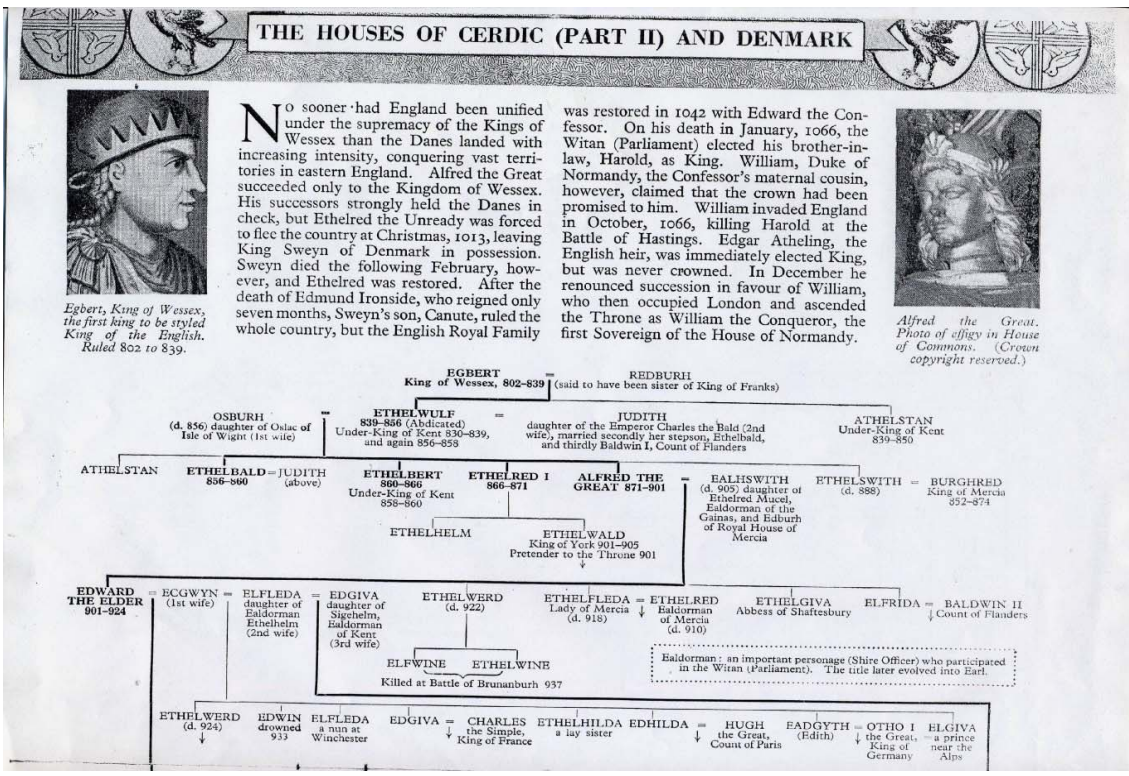
So the Gospel Book must be considerably older than we originally thought, and likewise the Lindisfarne Gospels must have been started in Aidan’s lifetime, although people were much more important to Aidan than even his precious Book, and so he was out on the mission field evangelising, rather than aiming to finish the Gospel Book!

There are also early (pre- Rhigyfach) references to Dewi in both England and Wales. In England, the cult of Dewi appears in Wessex at least as early as the eleventh century and possibly before. His name is recorded in the English Calendar of this region at this time, usually in the Welsh form of his name - Dewi, and this and the whole cult of the Saint in Wessex can be attributed to Asser, the tutor and author of the *Life of King Alfred the Great*, which was finished in 893. In his writings Asser says he was called by King Alfred (871-899), from ‘the westernmost parts of Wales’ and he responded and was made Bishop of Sherborne.

Asser refers to the monastery and ‘parochia’ of Holy Dewi, which means the church on the site of the present Cathedral and sphere of influence of the Saint, telling us that a relative of his was a ‘Bishop’ at St Davids, which Asser himself might well have been also. The most important Welsh reference to David in pre-Rhigyfach times occurs in a famous poem called *Armes Prydein Vawr* found in the *Book of Taliesin*. The poem refers to an agreement between the Welsh, the Danes of Dublin, the Irish and the men of Cornwall, Brittany and Strathclyde to unite against the English oppressor. The poet seeks to rally them all under the banner of Dewi “a lluman glan Dewi a drychafant” and foretells their ultimate victory. It is clear that their poem, representing David as a Soldier/Saint, belongs to the period when the English King Athelstan was vigorously exerting his authority westwards into south-eastern Wales.<sup>cxl</sup>

I am deeply grateful to Holy Trinity for giving me the opportunity to explore and write down what I have discovered, for all this meant a picture into an unknown world for me, although now they are making sense. Interestingly for us, Rhygyfach the monk wrote the following piece which is the key to the early life of St Aidan. This is the third piece of evidence which I have carried with me in my heart for all these years, and I am happy to pass it on to those who may be interested.

# Picture of the King Alfred Jewel





Alfred the Great (871-899) was followed by Alfred's son Edward (899-924) and his sister Ethelfreda, the '*Lady of Mercia*'. These were followed by Alfred's grandson Athelstan (924-939) and after him Alfred's great grandson Edgar (959-975). Below is the family tree of King Alfred. David L. Edwards has written a fascinating book on the period,<sup>cxli</sup> in which he tells us that Alcuin lived quietly in York, where he catalogued the library at York Minster which was rebuilt at this time. Fourteen years later he was asked to take over St Martin's old monastery at Tours and amongst other duties create a school and library there and organise the copying of Manuscripts.

King Alfred and his family are buried in Winchester Cathedral, his eldest daughter had become a widow, Queen Ethelfreda and together with her youngest brother Edward, they decided to run the country after Alfred's death. Ethelfreda became 'Lady of Mercia' and her brother Edward led the army. In 917-918 their campaign reconquered Mercia and East Anglia, also annexing Wessex.

Meanwhile Athelstan (924-939) Alfred's grandson, Edward's son, had subdued Northumbria and captured York where they based their kingdom; Edward also conquered the British in Cornwall and the Welsh princes, claiming he was king of all Britain.

By 937 Athelstan had triumphed, the brothers setting a Christian kingdom.

In 973 on Whit Sunday King Alfred's grandson Edgar was crowned and St Dunstan installed Archbishop of Canterbury, when he set about the reconstruction of the Church, religious houses being founded in the Benedictinal rule of St Benedict.





## Chapter Eighteen

### Hywel Dda (the Good).

**A page from St Dunstan's Bible.** He was born ten years after the death of King Alfred. He was related to the Royal family of Wessex, educated at Glastonbury, but became seriously ill, and this made him wish to direct his life to the service of God as a monk and priest. In 943 King Edmund 1<sup>st</sup> asked him to restore the monastic life of Glastonbury. This triggered the revival of organised monastic life in England. He was made Archblshop of Canterbury in 959. He was skilled as a many sided man, as a metal worker, scribe and draughtsman, he played the harp and loved the human voice. As an old man his delight was to teach the boys of the Canterbury Cathedral school – a gentle master, whose memory was cherished by his pupils.<sup>cxlii</sup>

So we see that Hywel Dda was a contemporary of all King Alfred's progeny, except Edgar, and since we are discussing the Gospel Book it is important to mention Hywel Dda (born towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and died in 950).

We have already noticed how there are great similarities between the two men, that is to say King Alfred and Hywel Dda.

It would therefore come as no surprise that Hywel Dda chose to rescue the Gospel Book of St Teilo, which was still lying on the altar at Llandeilo Fawr, and place it in Lichfield which was actually in Wales in earlier times. It was therefore safe from the Vikings who were the next threat to come to Wales pillaging the Churches around the coasts – they certainly wreaked havoc at Lindisfarne. The *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* gives us a long write-up on Hywel Dda saying that of all the kings of Wales only Hywel is called 'Good' (Dda in Welsh).

Hywel spent quite a considerable time in England and although he did not know Alfred personally he admired him greatly. Like Alfred he made a great attempt to coalate the Laws in Wales and put them into categories, and this was a massive amount of work *Hywel Dda THE LAW*, published by Gomer Press in 1990, under the title 'The Welsh Classics' by Dafydd Jenkins, shows a massive amount of work covering the laws from all over Wales. Some of

the Laws relating to women were very advanced and just. I cannot pretend to say I have read it from cover to cover, but it is a major piece of work. Hywel was based at Whitland in *The White House* and Adrian and I attended a garden ceremony where a commemoration garden was laid out to celebrate King Hywel Dda nearby. In 942 Hywel took the title 'King of all Wales', and he managed to keep peace throughout his reign. He was responsible for the founding of the kingdom of Deheubarth. Caer was still an important place in his time and Hywel who was a regular visitor to the English court, which may account for the very high dues Hywel had to pay simply because the English knew his circumstances, and indeed he also was a witness to seven Royal Charters there<sup>cxliii</sup>

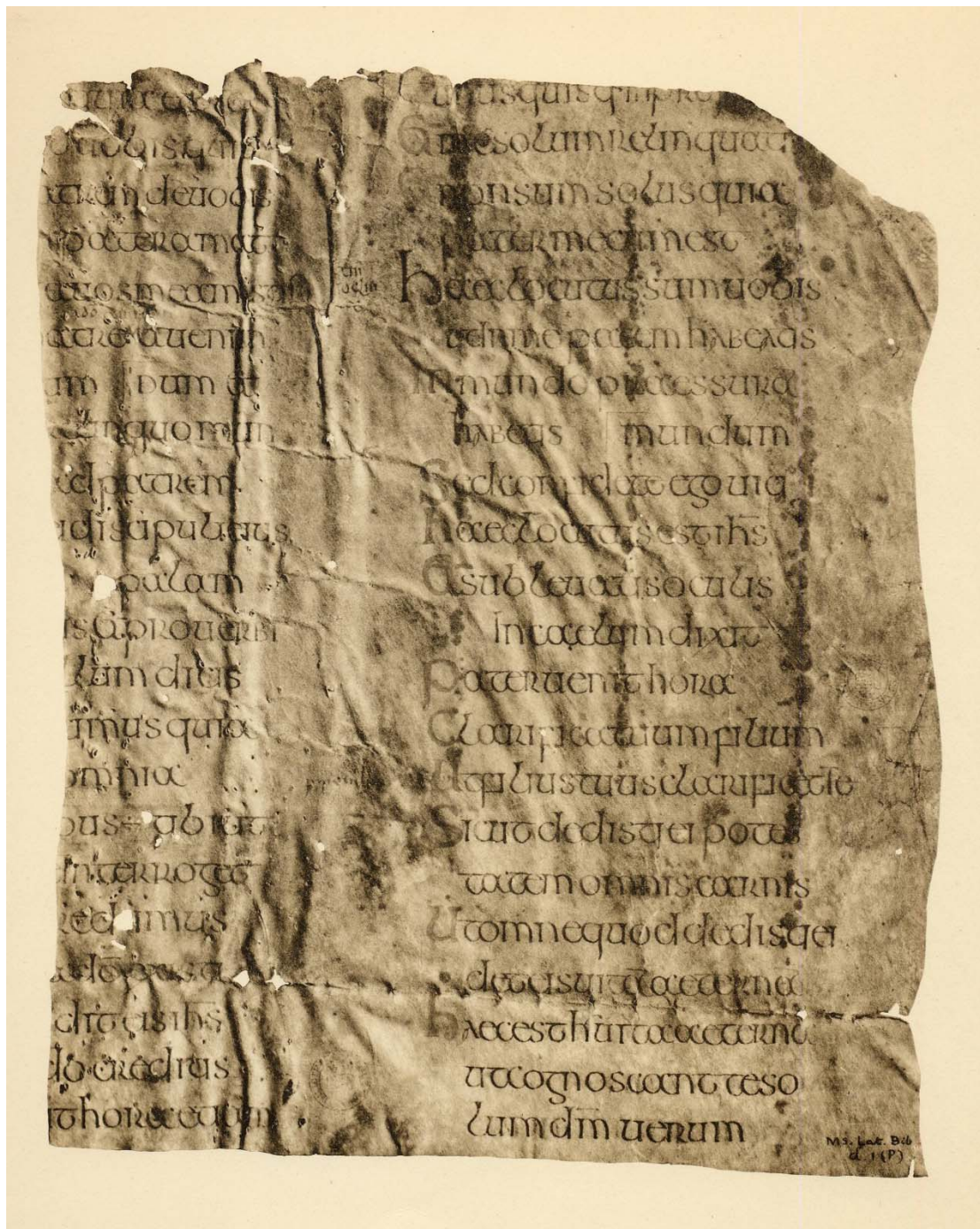
It is believed that he is buried near Golden Grove for a cross with designs of his period were noted on the broken shaft, found nearby. However the burial may have been on the other side of the river Towy.

It seems most likely that Hywel, realising the fragility of Welsh defences, (and indeed the Vikings were soon threatening the coastal defences around Britain), should have been anxious about the precious Gospel Book sitting so close by in Llandeilo Church. His constant visits to the English court could so easily have been used to remove the Gospels of Saint Teilo, and take the Book to Lichfield under armed guard. Lichfield was originally in Wales, Chad was dead by now, but he had been a pupil of Saint Aidan, and Rhygyfarch had disclosed the early history of the Book, so that Hywel Dda would have been aware of its provenance, and all in all Lichfield was seemingly more secure than Llandeilo. In fact no one probably was aware of its move until now.

Bishop Wynsi recorded as bishop of Lichfield 974-992, in the Gospel Book, was there about twenty years after Hywel Dda's death, so that they were not contemporaries.

## A page from St Dunstan's Bible

St Martin's legacy, Queen Bertha's family, Lindisfarne, St Aidan and all the saints.



The outstanding example with which one is left is shown in their faithfulness to their personal dedication to God. You in your small corner and I in mine. Lichfield

## LATER

This transfer from Llandeilo Fawr caused great resentment, the separate diocese of Menevia (St David's) being separated from St Teilo's, becoming akin to two separate fiefdoms. Llandaff claimed the prime see, although St David's once had the pallium (not from Rome, but from Jerusalem), while today history repeats itself in the name of geographical convenience. Thus Llandeilo Fawr was separated from its own cult and became but a pawn in the diocese of St David's. Llandaff became all powerful, with a protracted erosion of Llandeilo's influence, but the normal visitor and reader does not need this heady stuff! There are however some interesting stories to tell.

I have already mentioned that those farms around Crug-y-bar and Caio today still have 'Ynis' as their prefix in the same way, for the monks were forcibly retired at the dissolution of the monasteries, perhaps even earlier, to farm the lands around Talley.

### Norman Llandaff

At Llandeilo it is not clear what happened, but Dr Wendy Davies wrestled with the problem in 'An Early Welsh Microcosm' and 'The Llandaff Charters'. By 1093, William I had defeated the Welsh at Brecon. Soon after this the Chronicles of the Princes tell us: 'Then fell the Kingdom of the Britons' - and plunder, raiding and chaos ensued... Suffice to say the cr

I quote now from the leaflet to the opening of Memorial gardens to Hywel Dda in Whitland which we attended at Whitland.

*'Hywel was born towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and inherited half the kingdom of Seisyllwg on the death of his father Cadell. By 904, through marriage to Elen, the daughter of Llwarch Hen, he was king over the whole of Deheubarth – South West Wales.*

In 928 Hywel made a pilgrimage to Rome which must have affected Hywel greatly and affected his future conduct, it also shows that his kingdom was now stable.

In 942 Idwal Foel King of Gwynedd died in a battle with the English and Hywel became ruler of the North of the country as well.

It was at this time that Hywel set about codifying the Laws of Wales. He travelled to all areas of Wales, including local tribal areas. He set up the White House at Whitland on the banks of the river Taff. His method was to start with a conference at the White House when six representatives were invited from each local area in the country.

### Lichfield

From 928 Paulinus's Gospel Book remains at Lichfield Cathedral to this day, where it is kept under the best possible conditions.

12. 12. 13.



## End Notes

i. Martin of Tours. The shaping of Celtic spirituality by Christopher Donaldson, Canterbury Press, Norwich 1997. ISBN 1 85311 – 157 – 0.

ii. Ibid.

iii. Ibid.

Taken from a guide book obtained on a visit to Marmoutier.

622. In the hamlet of ‘Egypt’ is the Egypt Cromlech ... The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Mounmouth page 11.

vi. The early Cymry and their Church by Revd. D. Daven Jones B.A.

vii. Ibid.

viii. 2 Timothy chapter 4, verse 21.

The early Cymry and their Church by the Revd D.Daven Jones B.A.

Caractacus’s son Linus’s body lies in St Peter’s Church in Rome next to St Peter’s body, from which one may infer that he held an honoured place from earliest Christian times. The Church did not create ‘Popes’ in St Peter’s time, or as some now say he became the first Pope. Both Linus and his sister Claudia and her husband Pudens, were to die as Christian martyrs in Rome. (2 Tim. 4:21.)

xi. The Ecclesiastical History of the English People. ‘Book 1. Chapter 34.’ by Bede, Oxford World Classics with notes, 1994, ISBN 978 – 0 – 19 - 953723 – 5.

xii. Ibid. ( I would add that dating in an oral culture is not so accurate, e.g. the ‘Lives’ of St David, St Teilo and Aidan are typical, making it extremely difficult to extract the truth without the helpful written Roman presence here in this island. With Bede later we are on surer ground, (although he also contends with the same problem until Rome’s presence is again felt in Britain).

xiii. On a pillar in the Crypt of York Cathedral Constantine is commemorated, for having announced that it was here in

York that he claimed the Roman Empire for Christ.

xiv. Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire.

xv. Ibid.

xvi. Ibid.

xvii. *'The Introduction to The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouthshire notes that 'The connexion of the ancient British Church with the Greek Church has been touched upon hesitatingly by a few writers, but archaeological evidence for such a connexion has never been sifted and marshalled.' Mine is an old edition! However the suggestion was that the Roman Christian influence came first and was followed by the Greek influence. 'The style of the Welsh cross adopted by Welsh Christians for their sepulchral monuments was the eastern cross... The Greek cross is found in Ireland as well as Wales.*

xviii. The early Cymri and their Church by the Rev. D. Daven Jones B.A.

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xxxvi. Martin of Tours. The shaping of Celtic spirituality by Christopher Donaldson, Canterbury Press, Norwich 1997. ISBN 1 85311 – 157 –0.

xxxvii. Ibid.

xxxviii. Ibid.

xxxix. Taken from a guide book obtained on a visit to Marmoutier.

xl. 622. In the Hamlet of ‘Egypt’ is the Egypt Cromlech ...The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales and Monmouth, page 11.

xli. *The early Cymry and their Church* (page 8), by the Revd. D.Daven Jones, B.A., Vicar of Llanfynydd, Carmarthenshire, published by W.Spurrell and Son, Carmarthen 1910.

xlii. Ibid.

xliii. 2 Timothy chapter 4, verse 21.

xliv. *The early Cymry and their Church* by the Revd. D.Daven Jones B.A.

xlv. Ibid. (I would add that dating in an oral culture is not so accurate, e.g. the ‘Lives’ of St David, Teilo and Aidan are typical, making it extremely difficult to extract the truth without the helpful written Roman presence here in this island. With Bede later we are on surer ground, (although he also contends with the same problem until Rome’s presence is again felt in Britain).

xlvi.

xlvii. Ibid.

xlviii. Ibid.

*The early Cymry and their Church* by the Revd. D. Daven Jones B.A.

The Ecclesiastical History of the English People, by Bede,  
Oxford World Classics, Chapter 9.

- lii. *First History of England* by Mrs Cyril Ransome, published by Rivingtons, 34 King St, Covent Garden, London 1927.
- liii. Vortigern was son of Magnus Maximus and Queen Elen Luddog ; Bede mentions him in Chapters 14 and 15, also on page 33 Chapter 2 of this work the Jesus College MS XX Table X111, and Harleian MS 3589 Table 11. In the 500's Vortipor, son of Aircol Lawhir King of Demetia in South Wales was given the title 'Protector of King Arthur.' He died c 550.
- liv. *Beloved Valley. The Life of Saint Teilo. An imaginative biography* by Anne Lewis (my maiden name), pages 62-66. Llanerch Publishers ISBN 1 897853 93 9 (1995).
- lv. Bede. The Ecclesiastical History of the English People. Chapter 16.
- lvi. *The Quest for King Arthur*, by David Day, first published by De Agnostini Editions, Griffin House, 161 Hammersmith Road, London W6 8SD. 1995.
- lvii. In this complex period Vortigern's involvement has been mentioned twice already!
- lviii. *And shall these mute stones speak?* by Professor Charles Thomas - UWP 1994. Brychan's first son Kynauc by Banadluiet. page 139.
- lix. Brychan had three wives – Praust, Ribraust and Prostri.
  - lx. 'Merthyr' means 'martyr'; she is commemorated as 'Tydfyl the martyr'.
  - lxi. I have not included all 23 children in this family tree, being a family just too numerous!
- lxii. *Celebrating the Saints* page 176, 7<sup>th</sup> April. SCM Press 2004. ISBN 1-85311565
  - 7. Compiled by Robert Atwell.
- lxiii. Canon Doble wrote this in 1942.
- lxiv. A stone inscribed to him in both Latin and Ogham still

exists there, though slightly damaged.

- lxv. *And shall these mute stones speak?* by Professor Charles Thomas. UWP 1994, gives us a picture of this fascinating man Brychan.
- lxvi. See Brychan's family tree.
- lxvii. See larger family tree.
- lxviii. There was confusion between Paul Aurelian, son of King Perphirius who was trained in St Illtud's monastery, a young man at the time, and old Paulinus the Scribe who was buried at Maes Llanurthwal. A stone inscribed to him is now in the museum at Carmarthen mentioned in the next endnote.
- lxix. See Family Tree page
- lxx. *The lives of the Welsh Saints* by G.H.Doble edited by D.Simon Evans. Cardiff  
U.W.P. 1971. ISBN 0-7083-0870-8.
- lxxi. For further reading: *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* by John Reuben Davies. The Boydell Press Woodbridge. ISBN 1 84383 024 8. Also *The Llandaf Charters* by Wendy Davies. The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1979. *The Kingdom of Dumnonia. Studies in History and Tradition in South Western Britain AD 350-1150* by Susan M. Pearce in Lodenek Press Padstow, Cornwall, 1978.
- lxxii. I have been married to a prison governor/director for over thirty years, whose background was the Indian Army during that last war and Pakistan Army thereafter, to sadly separate that fine Indian continent also. Apart from the opportunity for multifaith agreement about our one and only God, peace was more than possible, but it was essential that we accepted that the God of all the world's major faiths was one and the same and the sooner we accepted that fact the better for peace in our world.
- lxxiii. Hen llan.
- lxxiv. Scholars are now questioning this. However we have

checked in Brittany that St Teilo did indeed evacuate a significant number from his area in northern Carmarthenshire.

- lxxv. Perhaps, in view of the fact that Dewi or St David was apparently born 30 years after St Patrick's death, Teilo and David were perhaps born around the beginning of the 500s or end of the 490s, they were contemporaries but that is not to say they were exactly the same age.
- lxxvi. We now know who Gelhi was, a contemporary of Paulinus the Scribe, while Cingal was also a contemporary, and living in the area. The confusion here may have been due to the Yellow Plague which followed.
- lxxvii. Monasterboice and its monuments, by Helen M. Roe.
- lxxviii. Perhaps I mistook what I called the 'grave' for the actual baptistery itself!
- lxxix. This was exactly the point where my mother and sister and I were billeted during the first year of the second World War, with Mrs Powell, Penbryn. I remember having our breakfast looking out of the window, up the valley, at perhaps one of the most beautiful views in Wales.
- lxxx. Two maps showing the locality of the Dolaucothy gold mines with names of some houses in the following text. With reference to this area see *Marginal Entries in the Book of St Chad*, C.U.P. *Agrarian History of England and Wales* 1972, ed. by J.Thirsix page 309. Also *Tir Telech, the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Caeo* by Glanville R. R. Jones – University of Leeds, *Studia Celtica*, XXVIII (1994), pp. 81-95. I also marked Frwd (Froodale farm?) since my Dryslwyn family appear to have come from a house of that name, also a house ruined for many years near Carmarthen; I know nothing about this family connection.
- lxxxii. Air photograph taken by ? Terry James showing Llandeilo Town c. 1990s for the ? Dyfed Archaeological Trust. This shows the circular outline of the monastic city, with the outline of Heol Rheged leading down to the river Tywi.

- lxxxii. “*He arrived with a party of ‘150 true pilgrims’ to study Christian ways and teaching under St Teilo; his large party was supplemented by ‘ten holy maidens’ (deich naebh – oga).*” Taken from *Monasterboice and its Monuments* by Helen M. Roe. 1981, published by Turner’s Printing Co. Ltd., Longford, Ireland, obtainable from the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society.
- lxxxiii. Lupus was Bishop of Troyes.
- lxxxiv. The Historian Cyril Jones of Carmarthen kindly sent me these maps and the following papers: *Tyr Telych, the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Caeo*, by Glanville J. Jones. *Studia Celtica*, XXVIII (1994), 81-95. Also *The Marginal Entries in the Book of St Chad*, C.U.P *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, ed. J.Thirsk.1972. This article gives a fascinating picture of the area in the middle ages.
- lxxxv. ‘*Tir Telych*’, *the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Caeo*. by Glanville R. J. Jones, University of Leeds. *Studia Celtica*, XXVIII (1994), 81-95. *Tir Telych*, *Bryn Telych* and *Cefyn Telych* are all shown on the Ordnance Survey map.
- lxxxvi. Hence a village like Caio (Latin), may also be spelt Gaeo (Gaelic), or Caeo (Welsh).
- lxxxvii. The five saints were named Gwyn, Gwyno, Gwynoro, Celynin and Ceitho. *Guide to the Gold Mines at Dolaucothi*.
- lxxxviii. Irish Heritage Series:14. *Ireland before St Patrick*. Published by Eason & Son Ltd, Dublin C 1978. Printed in Great Britain by Jarrold & sons Ltd Norwich 178. ISBN 0 900346 21 3.
- lxxxix. *The Roman Gold Mines at Dolaucothi* by G.D. Jones, M.A., D.Phil., F.S.A. and Dr P.R.Lewis, B.SC. Carmarthen County Museum Publication 1.1971. *Guide to the Gold Mines at Dolaucothi* by Joanna Methuen-Campbell. 1977?. Published by the National Trust, 22

Alan Road, Llandeilo, Dyfed, SA19 6HU. Brecon Beacons National Park Scenery. National Museum of Wales Cardiff 1979.

- xc. I include some of the names from letters I retain in my possession.
- xc. I wrote this for my book on St Teilo published in 1995, *Beloved Valley: The Life of St Teilo*, now sold out, using my Welsh maiden name, 'Anne Lewis'. I was sorry to have to make it a novel at the time when my knowledge was incomplete.
- xcii. '*Tir Telych*' the Gwestfau of Cynwyl Gaeo and Cwmwd Caeo. By Glanville R.  
J. Jones, University of Leeds. In STUDIO CELTICA, XXVIII (1994), 81-95.
- xciii. The marginal entries in the Book of St Chad. C.U.P. Agrarian History of England and Wales. ed. J.Thirsix 1972. Post- Roman Wales. Chad 6.
- xciv. Sir John E. Lloyd M.A. D.Litt. F. R. A.
- xcv. A History of Carmarthenshire. Volume I. chapters 1 and 2.
- xcvi. *The Rise and Fall of a Saint's Community: Llandeilo Fawr, 600-1200* by William A.Strange when he was Director of the Centre for Ministry Studies in the University of Wales, Bangor in 2002.
- xcvii. See previous page 107, Mr William's research.
- xcviii. Queen Elen had these roads built and they are known today as 'Sarn Elen'.

This service of Re-opening took place on Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup> 1984, at Ystradffin not far from the Reservoir. At that time I was not aware of St Paulinus the Scribe, and supposed it was Paul Aurelian. However I understand that this was the retreat of our learned Scribe.

*The Real Presence, in search of the earliest Icons* by Sister Wendy Beckett. Published in 2010 by The Tower Building, 11 York Road, London ISBN 978-14411-5887-1.



- ci. This copy is to be found as the cover page of Chapter Five.
- cii. Surprisingly to me Miss Enid Morgan told me that Cao (Caio) Church was known as a Mother Church and dedicated to St David, although today it seems curious that such a large church is situated in such a tiny village. However it begins to make sense when I consider these notes which Professor E.G. Bowen handed to me, and from which I quote here.
- ciii. A portion of the Ordnance Survey map around Crugybar and Pumpsaint. These two sections are continuation portions which have been split for convenience (pp. 100& 103).
- civ. ‘Bliadd’ is Welsh for wolf, just as ‘Lupus’ is the Latin equivalent. Bishop Lupus of Troyes came to Britain with St Germanus of Auxerre in the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century to put down Pelagianism. Perhaps he remained in Britain then, making his home in Wales. More likely I would think he might have returned to Wales when the great Synod of Llandewi Brefi was called to debate Pelagianism in the 540s and remained in Wales then. At any rate it appears that he lived near Cao (also spelt Caio).
- cv. The two maps shown in this chapter show some of the places mentioned in this section.
- cvi. We are indebted to Christian historians such as Mr Rhys Dafys Williams and Canon Doble, who were seeking to tease out the facts in historical evidence. The confusion arose when Canon Doble also discovered the origin of Paul Aurelian, since both men were brought up in the same area, and both named Paul or Paulinus, although Paulinus the Scribe must have been in Rome being tutored by the Pope, and learning to be a Scribe when Paul Aurelian was born.
- cvii. Janet Backhouse *The Lindisfarne Gospels* ISBN 0 7148 21489.
- cviii. Carpet pages Janet Backhouse’s book compares these two examples from the two Gospel Books. i.e. The Chad Gospels or the Gospels of Teilo, and the Lichfield Gospels,

Chapter 8, pages 64 and 65 in Janet Backhouse's Book. As Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library which owns the Lindisfarne Gospels, Janet Backhouse wrote of comparisons between this Book and the Gospels of Teilo now in Lichfield Cathedral. In Chapter 6 she compares the decorated pages p.39 I quote – The Gospels of St Chad, in the library of Lichfield Cathedral, displays the most striking resemblances of all to the Lindisfarne Gospels.

- cix. Cross Carpet pages Janet Backhouse shows the Cross Carpet page from the Gospels of St Chad, or the Gospels of St Teilo on her photograph page 66 in her book.
- cx. We do not know for certain when Paulinus returned to his native Wales. Be that as it may, we do know for certain that he was at the Synod of Llandewi Brefi and called for St David to come to it. Therefore St Paulinus the Scribe attended even though blind. Thus he was old but not in his dotage.
- cx. Janet Backhouse published a book on the Lindisfarne Gospels, and in chapter 8 Some Comparisons, she compares them to other Gospel Books notably on page 66 for instance, (Published by Phaidon, in association with the British Library), ISBN 0 7148 2148 9. 1981.
- cxii. The year that Janet Bakehouse died in 2004 on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- cxiii. Marginalia: In a letter to me dated December 18<sup>th</sup> 1981, Dr B.S.Benedikz, the Sub Librarian (Special Collections) of the University Library, University of Birmingham, wrote the then conclusions of a seminar held at Lichfield in July 1976, when 17 mediaevalists gathered to try to form conclusions. He wrote the results down for me in nine points, which I have before me now. We tried several times to meet, however it was not to be for either he or I could not manage it, so that I am very fortunate to have these letters.
- cxiv. Sister Wendy Beckett's little book 'Real Presence, in

search of the earliest Icons’.

- cxv. Published by the Continuum International Publishing Group. 2010. gives us a contemporary idea of the influences on Paulinus the Scribe at the time he spent during his stay in Rome, we do not know where he might have travelled in the Mediteranean, or how long he spent there in this formative period of his life.
- cxvi. These early Icons were of course contemporary with the Scribe, Saint Paulinus of Wales’s Gospel Book. Paulinus spent many years studying in Rome as did others such as Brynach during the period. He would have already come under the influence of the Coptic Church and their influence in Ireland and Wales in the monastic movement has already been mentioned.
- cxvii. Here again I would refer the reader to Sister Wendy Beckett’s easily accessible book mentioned above.
- cxviii. Dr Raleigh Radford wrote at length, many important times. I am deeply grateful for Adrian Arnold’s Family Trees throughout, and since Adrian Read History at Cambridge; I would like to reassure the reader that they are the result of keen research in this difficult and important area.
- cxix. For more information on the Paulinus stone please refer to Dr D Nash Williams’s book on archaeology or the Museum in Carmarthen.
- cxx. Correspondence with Dr Benedikz; December 1981.
- cxxi. The 17 mediaevalists, whose work was in English, Welsh and Biblical Studies, gathered to try to form conclusions. The results were:-
- cxxii. The codex was fairly certainly written in the first quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD.
- cxxiii. It was written by a scribe trained in the great writing-school at Lindisfarne, as may be seen by palaeographical comparison with the three great Gospel Books, the Books of Durrow and Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels.
- cxxiv. It was not written at Lindisfarne. This became clear when

Canon L.E.Hopkin-James published his detailed collation of the text, and our textual specialist at the seminar, Prebendary E.C.C.Hill D.D, confirmed this after a fresh partial collation. St Chad has been copied from an archetype which contains the so-called “SW Midlands” mixture of the Old Latin and Vulgate text, one which is neither Welsh ‘Old Latin’ nor Lindisfarne/Jarrow ‘Roman Vulgate.’

- cxxv. It was generally felt by the Welsh and English scholars alike that it was therefore written as a piece of ‘commissioned work’ in the West Midlands in the first quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and a strong case was made out by several people that it was a set of Gospels commissioned for the new Cathedral-shrine of St. Chad at Lichfield, consecrated by Bishop Hedda in 699.
- cxxvi. Without doubt it reached Wales presumably through the agency of Guzal and Gelhi; the latter presented it to Llandeilo Fawr monastery (see Prof.Melville Richard’s article in the National Library of Wales Journal v.XVIII). It was Professor Sir Idris Foster who came up with the likeliest solution as to how it returned to Lichfield. I Quote from my notes on the conference:-
- cxxvii. He pointed out that around 800AD, after the death of King Offa, Mercia had been much savaged by the Welsh in revenge for Offa’s heavy harassment of them during his long reign, it was very likely that a book as beautiful as St Chad would have been stolen and ferried into Wales by a marauder (Guzal ! could have been such a one). In the fullness of time, however, came the great treaty between Hywel Dda, Prince of Wales, and King Athelstan (934), by which Hywel gave many treasures to the King, who distributed them generously. What more likely, said Sir Idris, than that Athelstan reclaimed Lichfield’s book for Lichfield?
- cxxviii. The MS is certainly back by 950/60, when Bishop Wynsi of Lichfield signs it in the margin.
- cxxix. It is still intact in 1345 (see Sacrist’s Roll as published

by J.C.Cox, in 1881); it is not mentioned by Patrick Young in his list of 79 MSS found in the Chapter Library in 1622: it is however known that the one surviving volume of it was rescued by Archdeacon Higgins at great personal risk from the siege of 1646: I, for one (and I am supported in this by others I cannot bring myself to believe that, if the two parts were still together then, he would have gone to such trouble for just half the book, he said).

- cxxx. It is not mentioned in the documents which relate to the destruction of St. Chad's shrine in 1540, and there is no suggestion in any documents so far available, that it was deliberately split by anyone connected with the Cathedral. All we are sure of is that Archdeacon Higgins conveyed it safely to his patrons, William Seymour, Earl (later Marquess) of Hertford (and still later Duke of Somerset) and his wife Frances. The Duchess returned it to the Cathedral in 1673, and it has remained there ever since.'
- cxxxi. This was written to me by Dr B.S.S. Benedikz, Sub-Librarian (Special Collection) 18<sup>th</sup> December 1981.
- cxxxii. This however sadly did not take place. However Dr Benedikz gave me an important reference which he told me I could possibly obtain from the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, which I duly did: *The 'Lichfield' Gospels* (Book of 'Saint Chad) by Melville Richards. There in a nutshell is what is known of the book's peregrinations. Naturally, nothing substitutes for seeing the manuscript itself perhaps, when the Spring approaches, it may be possible to arrange for you to see it.'
- cxxxiii. So many people kindly helped me including the Bishop of St David's, the Reverend Wyn Evans, Donald and Patricia Moore, Professor Glanmor Williams, Professor David Austin, Prebendary E.C.C Hill D.D and many others besides, including L'Abbe Monsieur le Grand in Pol(*Paul*) de Leon with whom we stayed several times

in Brittany at his earlier southern parish of Landeleau where King Budic who was exiled to Dyfed for some years met and married St Teilo's sister. Eventually returning to his kingdom in southern Brittany with their family. St Teilo is celebrated each year with a special Tromene.

- cxxxiv. I have described this in detail in the same biography of St Teilo, now out of print.
- cxxxv. In her youth Mrs Blandy travelled round her home area around Llandovery with the Archaeologist George Eyre Evans which fascinated her, long before this renewed interest in the the subject by archaeologists.
- cxxxvi. This is situated near the Dam.
- cxxxvii. I have not been able to follow this up however.
- cxxxviii. On the cover page of Chapter Four.
- cxxxix. The name refers to the same man.
- cxli. The name refers to the same man.
- cxli. We would visit Wales to stay at our cottage in Llandeilo, whenever Adrian's prison work and one or two families allowed, to explore various places with Mrs Blandy or Miss Enid Morgan; however living a very busy life in London, as Adrian was then Governor of Feltham Young Offenders Institution (YOI) and Detention Centre, and we were involved with Cranstoun Drug Foundation Hostels and multiple criminological and social welfare projects involved in such work, until Adrian's retirement. Then running the South London Interfaith Group as joint chairman with a Plymouth Brethren Officer, bringing the multiple religious faiths together. As an ex-wartime Indian Army Officer, followed by the Pakistan Army and Commandant of Prisons in Cyprus and Nigeria and then the U.K, the Prison Department gave him a Simon Fellowship at Manchester University (1964-65), he was a lecturer at many Universities. After retirement for the next eleven years Adrian was involved with Interfaith work. Meanwhile I also became a Licensed Reader in the

Southwark Diocese in 1992, also gaining my Master of Philosophy with Swansea University in 2003, not to mention gaining eight grandchildren between us on the way!

- cxlii. Canon Doble in 1942 also wrote about his researches, which I read about when I started to follow up the work that Professor Bowen had left to me before his sudden death. I wrote to Mrs Dafys Williams in 1985 to try to find out the situation, and I have just come across her reply in which she told me that her husband, who had died, did work on the subject at the National Library. However I had become very involved with Prison work and life in that extremely active work of my husband, and have only recently managed to get back to our story now in November 2010.
- cxliii. We do have evidence of the church, from the early martyrs such as St Alban, and both legends and actual artefacts. However my specific theme here is the influence of St Martin's life, which is long enough.
- cxliv. See end chapter.
- cxlv. This note is totally misleading. I submit that the Lindisfarne Gospels were created later than the Lichfield Gospels, but clearly by a monk who knew the Teilo Gospels intimately.
- cxlvi. Scholars are now questioning this. However we have checked in Brittany that St Teilo did indeed evacuate a significant number from his area in Northern Carmarthenshire.
- cxlvii. I am quoting from The Reverend Christopher Donaldson's book *The Great English Pilgrimage: from Rome to Canterbury*. ISBN 1-85311-064-7 (hardback); ISBN 1-85311-098-1 (Paperback) The Canterbury Press, Norwich 1995.
- cxlviii. This booklet is probably now out of print; mine was bought by my mother on one of our half-term visits to Canterbury.

- cxlix. *Martin of Tours, the shaping of Celtic Spirituality*, by Christopher Donaldson. Published by Canterbury Press, Norwich. ISBN I – 85311-157-0 1980, 1997. *The New Springtime of the Church. Canterbury Church*, Norwich ISBN I85311-058-2. 1992. The Great English Pilgrimage from Rome to Canterbury. 1400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 597-1997. ISBN I- 85311-098-I.
- cl. An initial from a twelfth century manuscript, showing St Augustine and King Ethelbert of Kent, perhaps at his baptism, appears to have something similar to the bottom half of this font, supported on legs. Found on page 3 of the English Heritage booklet on St Augustine's Abbey.
- cli. Anglo-Saxon England. *The Oxford History of England*, third edition, by Sir Frank Stenton, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1985, page 34.
- clii. I have spent far too much time finding my way through both Bede and Anglo-Saxon England by Stenton, and am most grateful for the little book by T.H.Rowland Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, published by Sandhill Press in 1994, which I found on our Celtic tour in 1994 in Northumbria. In passing, a week or two ago my husband Adrian Arnold and I were impressed when we visited the British Museum and saw the artefacts found in the Sutton Hoo burial ship; it occurred to me that possibly this was the burial of King Edwin, but his head and arm were removed as Bede describes, and the only way to find out would be if there had been a skeleton in the boat?
- cliii. Wikipedia gives an expanded account of King Edwin for anyone who wishes to look into this more fully.
- cliv. Anglo Saxon Northumbria, by T.H.Rowland published by Sandhill Press Ltd, 17 Castle Street, Warkworth, Morpeth, Northumberland. NE65 OUW. ISBN O 946098 34 4. 1994. Printed by Martins, the Publishers Ltd. Berwick on Tweed, first Published by F. Graham in 1973.
- clv. At Home. A short history of Private life page 81 e.g. The Hall, in which Bill Bryson describes the primitive housing of these settlers, and goes on to say that Britain lost so



much of the civilisation it had before the invasions of this period, for instance the Roman civilisation, with stone-built houses and churches and even central heating! All this was destroyed by these invasions, setting the country back hundreds of years.

- clvi. T.H.Rowland *Anglo-Saxon Northumbria*, Sandhill Press Ltd. 17 Castle Street, Warkworth, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 0UW. ISBN 0946098 344. Printed by Martins the Publishers Ltd. Berwick on Tweed. First Published by F.Graham in 1973.
- clvii. The archaeological dig was in 1977.
- clviii. Her name was 'Hild', however today we know her as 'Hilda'.
- clix. Interestingly York was the site of the Emperor Constantine's announcement 300 years before that the Roman Empire was declared Christian. In 314, Bishop Eborius of York is recorded as having attended the Council of Arles in France. Previous to this York, London and Caerleon were the three chief Druidical religious centres of Britain.
- clx. Oswine followed Oswald, however he was murdered by Oswui shortly after he became king.
- clxi. *Anglo-Saxon England* Third Edition. By Sir Frank Stenton.
- clxii. I refer to Hild hebcforth as Hilda since we have come to know her as such today.
- clxiii. Others have dealt with the details of this Synod so that I will not take up this space, for my story is long enough already!
- clxiv. Copied from a leaflet bought in Lindisfarne in 1994.
- clxv. In Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* we read in Book II, Chapters 2 to 3 (p74).
- clxvi. 'For later on, in 605, a very powerful king of the English, Aethelfrith, collected a great army against the city of the legions which is called Legacaestir by the English and more correctly Caerlegion (Chester) by the Britons, and made a great slaughter of that nation of heretics. When he was about to give battle and saw their priests, who had

assembled to pray to God on behalf of the soldiers taking part in the fight, standing apart in a safer place, he asked who they were and for what purpose they had gathered there. Most of them were from the monastery of Bangor, where there was said to be so great a number of monks that, when it was divided into seven parts with superiors over each, no division had less than 300 men, all of whom were accustomed to live by the labour of their hands. After three days fast, most of these had come to the battle in order to pray with the others. They had a guard named Brochmail, whose duty it was to protect them against the barbarians' swords while they were praying. When Aethelfrith heard why they had come he said, 'If they are praying to their God against us, then even if they do not bear arms, they are fighting against us, assailing us as they do with prayers for our defeat.' So he ordered them to be attacked first and then he destroyed the remainder of their wicked host, though not without heavy losses. It is said that in this battle about twelve hundred men were slain who had come to pray and only fifty escaped by flight. Brochmail and his men at the first enemy attack turned their backs on those whom they should have defended, leaving them unarmed and helpless before the swords of their foes. Thus the prophecy of the holy Bishop Augustine was fulfilled, although he had long been translated to the heavenly kingdom, namely that those heretics would also suffer the vengeance of temporal death because they had despised salvation.'

clxvii. Susan M. Pearce *The Kingdom of Dumnonia. Studies in History and Tradition in South Western Britain AD 350 – 1150.* Lodenek Press, Padstow Cornwall, 1978, ISBN 0 902899 68 6.

clxviii. David L. Edwards has written about this in his excellent book *Christian England* first published in 1981 by William Collins Sons by Fount Paperback 1982 also.

clxix. She converted him before their marriage.

clxx. I quote from a book written by Jenny Austerberry which I

discovered on our Celtic tour in 1994, printed by English Life Publications Ltd. Derby. 1984. *Chad Bishop and Saint*.

- clxxi. *'In Search of the Dark Ages'* by Michael Wood BBC ISBN 0 14 02 3884 0. Penguin History.
- clxxii. T.H. Rowland –*Anglo-Saxon Northumbria*. Page 27. Sandhill Press. 1994.
- clxxiii. I have made use of my son's school folder for *King Alfred*, Jackdaw Publications, compiled by David Johnson No 89, printed in Great Britain SBN 305 618 13.
- clxxiv. Maes = field; Llan = church or parish; of Urthwal = the brother of St Paulinus.
- clxxv. Janet Backhouse was an Assistant Keeper in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library, which had custody of the Lindisfarne Gospels when she worked there. She died in 2004 I believe, but I never met her, however to my amazement she was reinforcing what I had come to understand about the similarity between certain parts of the two Gospel Books, that of the Lichfield Gospels and the earlier Gospels of Saint Teilo. We could have agreed to go into this similarity, but I did not read her book until after I had finished this study, and was so delighted to find her book after I had had three foot operations and was able to obtain her excellent book from the library. In fact I only sought the local Library book on the Lindisfarne Book because I myself wondered if there were similarities, and I was so excited to find someone else who was writing about them – I was devastated when I discovered that Janet Backhouse had died.
- clxxvi. *The Lindisfarne Gospels* by Janet Backhouse, 1981 PHAIDON in association with the British Library. ISBN O 7148 21489.
- clxxvii. Patrick died in 461 so that David could have been born in the 490s. I say this because it was St Patrick's belief that Dewi would be born thirty years after his death.

- clxxviii. The reference to ‘an island’ is a term often used for a monastery - an island for God in a pagan sea, in this case Maesllanurthwal.
- clxxix. We may assume that Paulinus returned to Maesllanurthwal the monastery of his brother Urthwal, unless of course he founded a monastery at Whitland first.
- clxxx. Clearly David’s training with Paulinus was many years previously.
- clxxxii. The heresy is discussed in the two pages at the beginning of this book.
- clxxxiii. *The Lindisfarne Gospels* by Janet Backhouse, 1981. PHAIDON in association with the British Library ISBN 0 7148 21489.
- clxxxiiii. *The St David of History* - Dewi Sant: our founder saint. Address given to the Friends of St David’s Cathedral on the occasion of the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the building of the Cathedral 1181-1981 and given by Professor E.G.Bowen MA. D.Litt. LID. D’Univ F.S.A. University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, Cambrian News Aberystwyth, 1981.
- clxxxv. The spelling of Rhigyfarch or Rhygyfach depends of course on the English spelling or Welsh version!
- clxxxvi. Wrmonoc.
- clxxxvii. I am indebted to Professor E.G. Bowen M.A. D.Litt. L.I.D. D’Univ F.S.A. University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, for his address ‘*The St David of History. Dewi Sant: our Founder Saint*’. Given to the Friends of St David’s Cathedral on the occasion of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of the Cathedral 1181-1981, given on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1981. Cambrian News Aberystwyth, 1981.
- clxxxviii. Christian England Volume 1- Its Story to the Reformation, Collins Fount Paperbacks, first published in 1981 and as Fount Paperbacks 1982.

clxxxviii. *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*, by Donald Attwater 1965. Also Pears Encyclopaedia edited by Dr Chris Cook 1994-95.

clxxxix. According to *A History of Wales* by John Davies, Penguin Books 2007.

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