

The Chronology of Arthur.

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“Wele'n awr y mae ein taith o'r diwedd wedi ein harwain ni hyd at vrenhinllys y penadur dieithr ac anirnadadwy hwnnw sy wedi peri cymaint o ddyrswch i hanesyddion a chwilwyr llenyddol yn yr oesoedd diweddar.”
Carnhuanawe (1836-1842).

CHAPTER I.

(a) *Evidence of the Excidium Britanniae.*

In ch. 26 of the *Excidium Britanniae* the siege of Badonicus Mons is given as occurring in “the forty-fourth year with one month already elapsed”. Bede, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* i, 16, interpreted this passage as meaning the forty-fourth year from the Advent of the Saxons into Britannia at Vortigern's invitation. According to the Bedan date of this last event (449), the siege would have taken place in $(449 + 43) = 492$. According to a British date (428), it would be $(428 + 43) = 471$; and as the annalistic year in the fifth century commenced on September 1st with the indiction, 471 would mean *our* September 1st, 470, to August 31st, 471. If, then, the siege took place when the first month of the year had already elapsed, the date would be October, 470.

(b) *Evidence of the so-called Annales Cambriae.*

Two incidents in Arthur's life are dated in the so-called *Annales Cambriae* as follows:—

Annus LXXII. The Battle of Badon, in which Arthur carried the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for three days and three nights on his shoulders, and the Britons were victorious.

ANNUS XCIII. The Action of Camlann, in which Arthur and Medraut perished.

In the era of the *Annales Cambriae*, ANNUS LXXII gives $(445+71)=516$,¹ which does not correspond with “the forty-fourth year” of the *Excidium Britanniae* whether this forty-fourth year be computed from 428 or 449. Nor does it give satisfaction if we equate the forty-fourth year with 516, and then compute backwards for the equivalent of ANNUS I, because we merely reach $(516 \text{ minus } 43)=473$, which is otherwise unknown as an initial year for chronological calculation. In no way can we make ANNUS LXXII tally with the forty-fourth year of the *Excidium Britanniae* by any calculation from initial years which are known to have been used for purposes of chronology, except by computing ANNUS LXXII from that year of Stilicho’s consulship which is actually used as an initial year in the calculations which preface MS. A of the *Annales Cambriae*, viz., the year 400. If ANNUS LXXII be computed from this year of Stilicho’s consulship, we get $400+71=471$; and as 471 means *our* Sept. 1st, 470 to Aug. 31st, 471, and as the siege occurred in the second month, we again arrive at October 470.

The other Arthurian annal from the same initial year gives as the date of the Action of Camlann and Arthur’s

¹ There are still many students who do not seem to have observed that the editorial equation of ANNUS I of the so-called *Annales Cambriae* with the year 444 is in flat contradiction to the editorial equations of the other *Anni* of this chronicle, which are all based on the equation of ANNUS I with 445. For example, if ANNUS LXXII in the era of the *Annales Cambriae* is 516, as everybody agrees, then ANNUS I cannot possibly be 444. Surely it is not necessary to have to explain that if ANNUS LXXII in the era of the *Annales Cambriae* is the equivalent of 516, as everybody agrees, the way to find the equivalent of ANNUS I is to subtract from 516 not 72 but 71; or must it be set forth in sober print that if ANNUS II be 446, ANNUS I will not be 446 *minus* 2?

death therein $(400+92)=492$, that is, our Sept. 1st, 491 to Aug. 31st, 492.

(c) *Evidence of the Historia Brittonum.*

In ch. 56 of the *Historia Brittonum*, the statement that Arthur "carried the image of Saint Mary, perpetual virgin, on his shoulders, and the pagans were put to flight on that day, and a great slaughter was inflicted on them through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through the power of Saint Mary, his mother" is associated with Arthur's eighth victory, viz., the Battle of Castellum Guinnion, and not with the Battle of Mons Badonis.

As to the Battle of Mons Badonis, Arthur is described as having slain 940 or 960 or 440 men in one day; and it is particularly stated that he did this by himself without assistance.

(d) *Evidence of the Historia Regum Britanniae.*

In Book ix, ch. 1, Geoffrey states that Arthur was in his fifteenth year when he began to reign, but does not give the interval of time which elapsed between his succession to power and his first attack on his foreign foe. As he mentions twelve years of the reign in Book ix, ch. 10, and another nine years in the following chapter, Arthur must have ruled at least twelve *plus* nine, or twenty one years.

In the same ch. 11 of Book ix Arthur is made to land in Gaul, which is said to have been committed at that time to the charge of a certain Follo, tribune of Rome, under the Emperor Leo. This Emperor Leo must either be Leo I, who ruled in the East from 457 to 474, or his successor Leo II, who only ruled for a few months in 474; for the next emperor of this name did not live till the eighth century. Leo is mentioned again as Arthur's con-

temporary in Book x, ch. 6, and in Book xi, ch. 1. As Arthur reigned *at least* twenty one years, and the two Leos only seventeen years between them, a portion of Arthur's regnal period must have fallen within the years 457 to 474, and another portion must have fallen outside them.

In Book viii, ch. 20, Geoffrey tells us that Arthur had a sister called Anna, who was married to Lot (Book viii, ch. 21) and became the mother of Walvanus (Gwalchmai). When Arthur had reached at least the twelfth year of his reign (Book ix, ch. 10), Walvanus was in his twelfth year, having already received arms from Pope Sulpicius or Suplicius, into whose service Arthur had sent him (Book ix, ch. 11). This Pope can be no other than Pope Simplicius, who ruled from 468 to 483. As Arthur's reign reached a tenth year after receiving the boy from Pope Simplicius (Book ix, ch. 11; Book x, ch 13), it must have extended to a tenth year from one of those during which Simplicius was Pope, that is, Arthur's reign must have terminated from $(468+9)$ to $(483+9)$, that is, from 477 to 492. It is certain therefore that Arthur ruled at least three years after the death of the Emperors Leo I and II in 474; and also that Arthur died sometime from 477 to 492.

In Book ix, ch. 4, Geoffrey unexpectedly and as it would seem *unwittingly* clears up the mystery surrounding Arthur's slaughter of 940 or 960 or 440 men at Mons Badonis by giving the number as 470, which is now seen to be none other than the date of the battle in our own familiar era. How the blunder in the *Historia Brittonum* originally arose is not easy to determine. "In uno die dccccl," etc., may be a misreading for some form of "in a d cccclxx" that is, in anno domini cccclxx; or there may be some other explanation. But in any case Geoffrey

seems to have copied the number 470, which in the light of our other evidence, and especially in the light of the evidence of Geoffrey himself, is clearly a date in the Dionysian era.

Geoffrey therefore *beyond all doubt* is following a consistent tradition which places Arthur's victories and death within the last half of the fifth century. But that he overlooked the limits of time postulated by his references to Pope Simplicius and the Emperor Leo appears evident from the very definite date to which he ascribes Arthur's defeat in Book xi, ch. 2, namely, the year 542. In giving this definite date Geoffrey departs from his usual practice, and as by so doing he here dislocates the chronology which he appears to be unwittingly following, it is clearly an importation from another source. The date 542 is as designed as the implicit dates demanded by the references to Pope and Emperor are undesigned. What then is Geoffrey's authority for 542 as the year of Arthur's fall at Camlan? I do not hesitate to say that it is the *Annales Cambriae*, in which, as we have seen, Camlan is placed opposite Annus xciii. Geoffrey equated Annus i with the Bedan date of the Saxon Advent, viz., 449, to which he simply added according to his wont Annus xciii with the above result $(449 + 93) = 542$.

As Arthur was in his fifteenth year when he began to reign, and as the parents assigned to him by Geoffrey, namely, Uther and Igera, came together after Uther had been made king, Uther must have reigned at least fifteen years.

In Book viii, chs. 14 and 15, the death of Aurelius Ambrosius, whom Uther succeeded, is made to synchronize with the appearance of a comet of extraordinary brilliance and magnitude. The only phenomenon of this description, which our chronology allows, is the comet which appeared

in the winter of 442-3. It is mentioned by Idatius and Marcellinus, and was visible in Britain. In the following Easter Uther meets Igerna (viii, 19), marrying her soon afterwards, Arthur's birth occurring probably the next year, viz., 444. As Arthur was in his fifteenth year when he began to reign, Uther must have ruled till $(444+14)=458$. This would mean that Arthur was a contemporary of the Emperors Leo I, Leo II, and Zeno.

Assuming now that Arthur won at Mons Badonis in October 470, let us follow Geoffrey's chronology of subsequent events in Arthur's career, which I read as follows:—

- ix, 8. Arthur is made to celebrate the following Christmas at York, *i.e.*, Christmas, 470.
- ix, 10. Arthur is made to land in Ireland in the following summer, *i.e.*, the summer of 471. Arthur is made to return to Britain at the close of winter, *i.e.*, the close of winter, 472. Arthur is made to remain in Britain, ordering the affairs of his realm till the twelfth year, *i.e.* $472+11=483$.
- ix, 11. In 483, then, Arthur is made to attack Norway, Denmark, and Gaul. At this time Walvanus is in his twelfth year, having received arms from Pope Simplicius, who, as a matter of fact, died in this very year, 483. Walvanus, therefore, was born in 472. In the ninth year Arthur is made to return to Britain in early spring, *i.e.*, the early spring of $(483+8)=491$.
- ix, 12. Arthur is made to celebrate the Whitsun Festival at Caerlleon, *i.e.*, Whitsun, 491.
- ix, 15. The Romans are made to order Arthur's appearance at Rome by the middle of August

in the following year, *i.e.*, mid-August, 492. For some five years previous to Whitsun, 491, Arthur had engaged in no war (cf. also x, 7), *i.e.* (491 minus 4) to 491, *i.e.*, 487 to 491.

ix, 20; x, 2. Arthur is made to start for Rome at the beginning of August, *i.e.*, August, 491.

x, 13. Arthur is made to remain subduing the cities of the Allobroges in Gaul throughout the following winter, *i.e.*, 491-2; and with the opening summer to ascend the mountain passes for the City of Rome, *i.e.*, the opening summer of 492. At this point the news arrives of Modred's rebellion.

xi, 1. Arthur is made to hurry back to Britain, postponing his expedition against the Emperor "Leo". Battles are fought in rapid succession at Richborough, Winchester, and Camlan. In the latter Arthur falls, presumably in the summer of 492.

Geoffrey was certainly wrong in continuing the reign of the Emperor Leo to the year of Arthur's defeat at Camlan, for both Leos died in 474; and, as we have seen, the reference to Pope Simplicius and Walvanus extends Arthur's reign years after the death of the Leos, and indeed makes Arthur's reign to terminate from 477 to 492.

CHAPTER II.

BADONICUS MONS.

(a) *Evidence of the so-called Annales Cambriae.*

The earliest MS. extant of the document, which now goes under the unsatisfactory title of *Annales Cambriae*, contains two entries, which I read as follows:—

Annus LXXII.—The Battle of Badon, in which
Arthur carried the cross of our Lord Jesus

Christ for three days and three nights on his shoulders; and the Britons were the vanquishers.

Annus ccxxi.—The Battle of Badon for the second time.

The first of these, as we have seen, refers to an event which took place in October, 470, A.D.

The second is presumably an event of the latter half of the 7th century, for Annus ccxxi, in the era of the *Annales Cambriae*, is $445 + 220 = 665$.

(b) *Evidence of the Historia Brittonum.*

The *Annales Cambriae* (MS. A) was compiled about the mid-tenth century as a continuation of the *Historia Brittonum* and the other writings, which are associated with the name of Nennius, or, at least, as an addition to them. The *Historia Brittonum*, therefore, is the older authority.

In the enumeration of Arthur's twelve victories in ch. 56 of the *Historia Brittonum* the following items appear among others:—

The eighth was the battle at Castellum Guinnion, in which Arthur carried the image of Saint Mary, perpetual Virgin, on his shoulders, and the Pagans were put to flight on that day, and a great slaughter was inflicted on them through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and through the power of Saint Mary his mother.

The twelfth was the battle at Mons Badonis, in which 960 men fell in one day through one onset of Arthur; and no one overthrew them except himself alone.

Now it will be immediately observed that the portage of Christian symbols on Arthur's shoulders is stated in

the older tradition of the *Historia Brittonum* to have occurred in the battle of Castellum Guinnion and not in that of Mons Badonis. And as the battle of Castellum Guinnion became much less known than that of Mons Badonis (which last indeed has long been world famous), there would be a greater and an increasing tendency to ascribe these particulars, whereby Arthur figures as a Champion of Christendom, to the battle of Badon rather than the reverse. The older tradition, therefore, of the *Historia Brittonum* is to be preferred to the later statement of the *Annales Cambriae*, and the original pre-eminence of the battle of Castellum Guinnion in this particular is to be restored as against the battle of Badon.

Indeed, if we omit the statement as to the slaughter of 960 men in the battle of Badon (which we have seen to be a mere bungle as to a simple date in the Dionysian era), it will be found that in the list of Arthur's victories the battle of Castellum Guinnion stands alone as to any record of details. The list, translated from Mommsen's text, reads as follows:—

The first battle was at the mouth of the river which is called Glein.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth, on another river which is called Dubglas, and is in the region of Linnuis.

The sixth battle on the river which is called Bassas.

The seventh was the battle in the wood of Celidon, that is Cat Coit Celidon.

The eighth was the battle at Castellum Guinnion, in which Arthur carried the image of Saint Mary, perpetual virgin, on his shoulders, and the Pagans were put to flight on that day, and a great slaughter was inflicted on them through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and through the power of Saint Mary the Virgin, his mother.

The ninth battle was fought in the city of Legion.

The tenth battle occurred on the shore of the river which is called Tribruit.

The eleventh battle took place on the mountain which is called Agned.

The twelfth battle was at Mons Badonis, wherein 960 men fell in one day through one onset of Arthur; and no one overthrew them except himself alone.

The contrast between the treatment of the battle of Castellum Guinnion and that of the rest appears to give this victory an importance which pertains to none of the others, not even to Mons Badonis.

Moreover, whereas all the texts used by Mommsen are in general agreement as to the first ten battles, the reverse is the case as to the last two. The confusion is so great that all the Irish MSS. not only omit the names of the final victories including Badon, but omit the eleventh altogether, leaping from the tenth to the twelfth. Agned is left out by M and N, which give the eleventh as "Breguoin (or Breuoin) which we call Cat Bregon". This last is omitted by H and K, whilst no less than six MSS., viz., C, D, G, L, P, and Q, jumble the two names together thus, "which is called agned cath regomion (*or agned cat bregomion or agnet tha bregomion*)."
MS. P like the Irish MSS., omits the name of Mons Badonis but gives the rest of the statement as to the twelfth battle. We have thus five MSS. giving thirteen names for Arthur's twelve victories; and as the confusion is confined to the last two victories, the disturbing cause must be sought for in that quarter.

There are clearly three claimants for the two final victories, namely, Agned, Breguoin, and Mons Badonis; and of these three it may be said at once that the chances for retention in the list were all in favour of Mons Badonis. The mention of the "*obsessio Badonici montis*"

in the *Excidium Britanniae*, and the acceptance of that document by Bede, who not only incorporated it largely into the text of his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, but at least hinted (Book i, ch. 22) that it was a work of Gildas, were favourable to the cause of Badon's renown. Therefore of the three names, if one had to be ejected, it was not likely to be Badon. And so some omitted Agned and others Breguoin, but most jumbled the two together, the object being to find room for Badon at all costs.

It is thus practically certain that the Mons Badonis victory was not originally in the list of Arthur's triumphs, but was introduced under the influence of the *Excidium Britanniae* and of Bede. Once introduced it began to cause the confusion which we now see in every text of the the Arthurian tractate which has come down to us.

The victory of Badonicus Mons is clearly stated in the *Excidium Britanniae* to have been due to unexpected assistance. This is contradicted in the *Historia Brittonum* where Arthur wins unaided.

“Y cyvryw yw hanes Arthur vel y ceir ev yng ngwaith Nennius ; ac oddieithr y rhivedi anghyffredin a haerir iddo ladd ai law ei hun, nid oes dim yn yr hanes i gyffroi amheuaeth perthynol iw hanvodiad. A gall vod peth anghywirdeb yn yr ail ysgriviad o'r rhivedi yma ; canys y mae'r Brut wrth grybwyll am yr un vrwydr, sev Mynydd Badon, yn dywedyd mai 470 oedd y rhivedi a laddodd. Ond bydded hyn vel y bo, nid rhyw un haeriad o'r vath hwn sy ddigon i ddymchwelyd hanesiad cyvan ; onide, nid aml y gwelem hanes awdurdodol yn perthyn i un genedl ba bynnag. A meddyliav am yr ysgrivenyddion a amheua hanvodiad Arthur na ddarvu iddynt erioed ystyried ei wir hanes, ond yn unig edrych ar y ffugdraethoden a geir yn y Brut a'r hen gyvansoddiaden ereill o'r canoloesoedd.”

Carnhuanawc, 1836-1842.

(c) Evidence of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*.

In Book ix, 3, 4, Geoffrey unhesitatingly locates Mons Badonis at Bath, and, in his description of the battle,

states of Arthur that he bore “on his shoulders the shield called Priwen, in which was painted an image of Saint Mary, mother of God, which frequently recalled her to his memory”. This, together with the number 470 lower down (with which we have already dealt), shews that Geoffrey had before him a less corrupt tradition than has otherwise reached us, for the reference to the shield indicates that the account of the portage on Arthur’s shoulders is due to a misreading of *iscuid*, shoulder, for *iscuit*, shield. Geoffrey, of course, in his account combines the purer and corrupter elements, but leaves enough to shew that he knew and was using a purer tradition.

Y mae'r geirieu Cymraeg, ysgwyd, tarian, ac ysgwydd, aelod o'r corff, mor gyffelyb yn enwedig mewn hen ysgriveu vel y byddai'n hawdd eu camsyniad; ac yn lle cyfieithu ar ei darian rhoddi ar ei ysgwyddau. Ac y mae [Siëffre o Vynwy] yn rhoddi'r ymadrodd yn vwy eglur yn y modd canlynol, Humeris quoque suis clypeum vocabulo Priwen in quo imago sanctae Mariae, etc., ac ar ei ysgwyddau darian a elwid Prïwen a llun Mair santaidd arni. Carnhuanawc, 1836-1842.

(d) *Evidence of the Excidium Britanniae.*

According to the *Excilium Britanniae* the Saxons first settled in Britain no small interval after A.D. 446. They came as auxiliaries, but soon found a pretext to rebel, and drove the Britons completely from the eastern portion of southern Britain to “the western ocean”, “from sea to sea”; all that was left to the Britons were the mountains, forests, and sea-islands of the west.

After the Britons had thus been completely driven into the western uplands of southern Britain, they gathered together under Ambrosius Aurelianus, lest they should be utterly destroyed, and won their first victory. Not a word is said of the Britons recovering any lost ground, only that they managed owing to this victory to save themselves from total extermination.

In chapter 26 we read that from the time of this victory warfare continued between the Britons and Saxons, now favourable to the one and now to the other, “until the year of the siege of Badonicus Mons and of almost the last slaughter, though not the least, inflicted on the gallows rogues; *which year begins, as I have discovered, as the forty-fourth year with one month already gone; which also is the year of my birth.*” Those who witnessed “the hopeless ruin of the island” caused by the invaders, and the “unexpected assistance” which resulted in the victory of Badonicus Mons, remembered the lesson to their advantage. But when these witnesses died away and a new generation arose “ignorant of that storm and having experience only of the present quiet”, the lesson was forgotten, except by a very few.

Whatever may be thought of this passage as it now stands, this much at least seems clear that, following on a tumultuous period, a notable victory had been won over the Saxons, which in the Latinity of the text bears the name of Badonicus Mons, “the Badonic hill”; that this victory was regarded by the author of the *Excidium Britanniae* as due to unexpected assistance; and that it was succeeded by a period of external peace, which had lasted more than a generation when the author of the passage in question was writing.

As the passage now stands, Badonicus Mons is undoubtedly intended to represent a victory of Arthur in October 470, this date being added in terms of the 428 computation of the first Advent of the Saxons. But as the *Excidium Britanniae* places the first advent of the Saxons no small interval after the letter to Aetius in 446, it is clear that its original author was not using the 428 computation but one which dated the first coming of the Saxons sometime after 446. The statement there-

fore as to “*the forty-fourth year with one month already gone, being also the year of my birth*”, must be treated as a gloss incorporated into the text and contradicting it.

According to a prophecy mentioned in chapter 23 there was to be no considerable interval of peace between the Britons and the Saxons for one hundred and fifty years from the arrival of the latter. For the first one hundred and fifty years the Saxons were to be engaged in frequent devastations. As then these devastations did not cease until the siege of Badonicus Mons, when a period of peace began, which had already lasted more than a generation when the author of the *Excidium Britanniae* was writing, it would follow that *Badonicus Mons was fought a century and a half after the Saxon Advent*; and as the author fixes the Saxon Advent no small interval after A.D. 446, it follows that the battle took place in the seventh century. This plain purport of the narrative that Badonicus Mons terminated the one hundred and fifty years' frequent devastations of the Saxons has been obscured by the above gloss.

As we have seen, it is practically certain that Badonicus Mons did not figure in the original list of Arthur's victories, but was forced into the list on the strength of this very passage in the *Excidium Britanniae*.

Badonicus Mous is treated as having brought to an end that stormy period, which witnessed “the hopeless ruin of the island”. Now it is the basic fallacy of the *Excidium Britanniae* that it regards the term ‘Brittania’ as equivalent to the whole island of Britain, from John o’ Groat’s to Land’s End, which is assumed to have been held by Britons from one extremity to the other under Roman rule, until the north of the island, beyond the Stone Wall, was filched from them before A.D. 446 by the Picts and Scots; and the south of the island from

its eastern part to the western ocean was seized by Saxons, who landed for the first time no small interval after A.D. 446. And all this is made to have taken place after the insurrection of Maximus in A.D. 383-388! By the above passage, therefore, we are actually asked to believe that within less than ninety years, from 383 to 470, the Britons had been deprived of the whole island of Britain from John o' Groat's to Land's End, except the mountains, forests, and sea-islands of the south west! Nay, that prior to 470 the Britons had been completely expelled from "England", "from sea to sea", by Saxon invaders, who did not arrive until a considerable interval had elapsed after A.D. 446¹!

It is not to be thought of that a British writer, born in 470, could have so misconceived the process of our island history from the usurpation of Maximus less than a century before; that he could have supposed that the walls of Antonine and Hadrian and the forts of the Saxon Shore were built within that period; much less that that writer could be Gildas ab Caw of Pictland, who, born near the Walls, was actually one of those very "Picti" whom the author of the *Excidium Britanniae* rails at.

If it be assumed that the original writer of the *Excidium Britanniae* knew what battle was referred to, when its native name was translated into such bombastic Latin as Badonicus Mons, "the Badonic hill", it must be allowed that in such unfamiliar guise it was liable to misunderstanding. It was certainly so misunderstood by the person who made sure that it was the Arthurian victory of 470, who dated it in the era of 428, and synchronized the year of its occurrence with the birth of Gildas.

¹ See my forthcoming paper "*The Saxones in the Excidium Britanniae*" in the *Arch. Cambrensis*; also pp. 449-456 in the number of that journal for October, 1910.

It remains, therefore, for us to identify the contest, and to seek for it in the seventh century, when the English were in full occupation of south eastern Britain, "from sea to sea", with the Britons in Wales and the West. Nor have we far to seek, for opposite Annus ccxxi in the oldest copy of the *Annales Cambriae* we find marked a "Battle of Badon for the second time". Seeing now that the first Badon is a misnomer, it is allowed us to strike out the last words, and to regard this as the one genuine Badon, which, in the era of the *Annales Cambriae*, fell in $(445+220)=665$.

The real Battle of Badon, therefore, was fought in the seventh century, in a year bearing an annuary number 665.

NOTE.

CAW OF PICTLAND, FATHER OF ST. GILDAS.

The earliest *Vita Gildae* as far as chapter 31 was written in Brittany about the end of the 10th century by a monk of Ruys. According to this *Vita*, Gildas, who was the son of Caw o Brydyn, that is, Caw of Pictland, was born in the *regio* of Arecluta, where his father reigned as king. Arecluta, later Arglud, means on or opposite the Clyde, just as Arvon means on or opposite Môn (Anglesey). The *Vita* describes the *regio* of Arecluta as a part of Britain, which took its name from the river Clut (Clyde) "by which that *regio* is for the most part watered." The family of Gildas, therefore, originated near the western half of the Wall of Antonine.

Caw is variously described in the *vitae Gildae* as *rex Scotiae*, a king of Scotia, *rex Albaniae*, a king of Albania, and *rex Pictorum*, a king of the Picts. The latter is the nearest equivalent of the oldest name by which he is known in Welsh, namely, Cau Pritdin. This last is found in the *Vita S. Cadoci*, by far the most valuable of our Welsh *vitae sanctorum*, where *Cau cognomine Pritdin* is said to have reigned for many years *ultra montem Bannauc*. Mr. Skene and Mr. Phillimore see the name *Bannauc* in the place-name Carnunnock, near Glasgow, and on this account would identify *Mons Bannauc* with the Cathkin

Hills. In this case the *regio* of Arecluta would be in modern Renfrewshire.

Caw o Brydyn is also known in Welsh manuscript literature as Caw o Dwrcelyn, Caw of Twrcelyn, a *regio* in the north of Anglesey, and at one time one of the six cymwds of the island (see pp. 93-5 *supra*). He is repeatedly so called in Dr. Gwenogvryn Evans's *Report on MSS. in Welsh*. "It is not clear (says Mr. Phillimore) how Caw got the name of 'Caw of Twrcelyn' (in Anglesey), which is found in *Hanesyn Hen*, pp. 12-3, 46-7, where are also given the names of his seventeen or twenty-one children, some of them daughters, and many of them commemorated as saints in Anglesey" (*Y Cymmrodor*, xi, 75, note 7).

The association of the family of Caw, in literature, with Twrcelyn in Anglesey is as early as the Breton *Vita Gildae* itself, for it states how that two of his sons, Egreas and Alleccus, together with a daughter Peteova, withdrew to a remote part where each of them founded an oratory. These three oratories were near one another, that of the virgin sister being in the centre. Thus the two brothers were able to sing mass for their sister every day alternately. As they died they were buried in their respective oratories, which, in the time that the monk of Ruys was writing, were famous and illustrious for their constant miracles. The sites of the oratories of Egreas and Alleccus are represented to day by the churches of Llaneugrad and Llanallgo, both situated within the ancient cymwd of Twrcelyn in Anglesey, and about half-a-mile apart. The oratory of Peteova must have lain between them.

When St. Cadog met Cau Pritdin, the latter was no longer reigning in the *regio* of Arecluta. He had come away from beyond Mons Bannauc *ad has oras*, to these borders or coasts, where St. Cadog had settled for a time to build a monastery and to convert pagans. The legend of St. Cadog's raising Caw from death and hell would seem as though Caw himself were a pagan, but, however that may be, Caw is made to become a disciple of St. Cadog, and to remain in that place till his death (*ad ipsius obitum illic*). Consequently Caw never returned to settle in his old *regio* and *regnum* of Arecluta. The passage ends with the significant statement that Caw received a grant of twenty-four vills from the *Albanorum reguli*; in other words, Caw who had formerly been a king beyond Mons

Bannauc, in the little *regio* of Arecluta, received a new little *regnum* of twenty-four vills. And as Caw lived the last years of his life near Cadog's monastery, it is practically certain that that monastery was surrounded by this little *regnum*.

It is clear that to the writer of the *Vita S. Cadoci* (§22) all this took place in Scotland, where he has made Cadog go on pilgrimage to St. Andrew's in imitation of his former pilgrimages to Jerusalem and Rome. But as St. Andrew's was founded centuries after Cadog's time, this can only be a gloss on the original account. All that we can be certain of is that Cadog went amongst the Albani or Picts; that he met Caw of Pictland, who became his disciple, and died near the monastery which Cadog had founded; and that Caw had a little kingdom of twenty-four vills in that place, which was not Arecluta. The writer and compiler of the *Vita S. Cadoci*, seeing that Cadog had gone amongst the Picts, thought that this must be Scotland, and added his explanation of a pilgrimage to St. Andrews. But in St. Cadog's time there were "Picts" in southern Britain, to wit, between the R. Dee and the R. Teivi, where Cunedda and his sons, *gwyr y gogledd*, had settled from southern Scotland. If, therefore, we look for Cadog's monastery, which he founded among the Picts, in North Wales and Cardiganshire, we find that in the whole of this district there is only one, and that one is in the *cymwd* of *Twrcelyn* in Anglesey. It is still called Llangadog, *i.e.*, the *llan* or *monasterium* of Cadog, being situated about the middle of Twrcelyn, and not three miles distant from the once illustrious oratories of Egreas, Alleccus and the virgin Peteova, the children of Caw of Pictland.

There can then be little or no doubt that Cau Pritdin, the father of St. Gildas, was a Pictish raider, who in the fifth century came from the banks of the Clyde *ad has oras*, to these coasts of Anglesey, *causa diripiendi easdem atque vastandi*, for the purpose of plundering and ravaging the same, as Caw himself is made to confess in the *Vita S. Cadoci*; and that he established himself in the district of Twrcelyn, with which his name was afterwards associated, where he became a disciple of St. Cadog at the new monastery of Llangadog in Twrcelyn, and where he ruled as king over a little *regnum* of twenty-four vills till his death.

It remains to be said that the pedigree of Cau Pritdin

appears to be unknown. No ancient or reliable document seems to give it. Only in late post-reformation and very much doctored writings, contained in the *Iolo MSS.*, do we find a table of ancestry provided for him, which, however, is not that of a Pictish raider, but of a quite respectable Devonian royal house, namely, the line of Geraint ab Erbin. Geraint had a son called Cadwy, with whose name that of Caw of Pictland has been confounded. It is in these same writings, in the *Iolo MSS.*, that we find the ridiculous identification of Gildas with "Aneurin", on the strength, no doubt, of the supposed connection between *Gild-as* and *An-aur-in*. "Aneurin" would be for Aneirin, said to come from the Latin *Honorinus*. In the *Historia Brittonum* (ch. 62), the name is written Neirin. I can find no evidence for Prof. Anwyl's statement in the *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, ii, 1, that Aneirin was the son of Caw.

HUAIL, SON OF CAW.

According to the Breton *Vita Gildae* Caw was succeeded as king by his warlike son Cuillus. In the *Vita Gildae* of Caradog of Llangarvan, who was a contemporary of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Caw is given twenty-four sons, victorious warriors, one of whom was Gildas. That Gildas, however, is not to be counted for a victorious warrior appears lower down where his twenty-three brothers are described as constantly resisting Arthur, "the king of the whole of Great Britain". The eldest of them is called Hueil who would submit to no king, not even to Arthur, a statement which is echoed in the story of *Kulhwch and Olwen* where, in the list of Caw's children, it is remarked of Hueil that he never made a request at the hand of a lord. Hueil, says Caradog, used to sally forth from "Scotia" to ravage and plunder, and this so successfully and so frequently that Arthur had to run him to earth, which he did in the island of "Minau" or "Mynau". [This is usually supposed to be the Isle of Man, and Caradog may have intended it as such. The death of Hueil at the hands of Arthur *in insula Minau* undoubtedly represents a fact of history, which I would read as happening in Anglesey rather than in the Isle of Man]. The animosity between Arthur and Hueil is also echoed in the story of *Kulhwch and Olwen*, where it is ascribed to the fact that Hueil had stabbed Gwydre, his own sister's son. [It may

be stated that according to this story Arthur himself had a son called Gwydre, whose death is ascribed to the boar Twrch Trwyth at the same spot where Gwarthegyð the son of Caw was also killed by the boar.]

The Cuillus of the Breton *Vita* is generally identified with the Hueil of the Welsh *Vita*; and if Egreas and Alleccus may stand for Eugrad and Allgo, so no doubt may Cuillus for Hueil. Hueil, however, according to Caradog, never became king, whereas Cuillus succeeded his father in the kingdom. It should be stated that among Caw's children, as recorded in *Kulhwch and Olwen*, there appears one called Celin, who may possibly be the Cuillus of the Breton *Vita Gildae*, especially if it could be shewn that he gave his name to Twrcelyn.¹

NOTE ON ST. DAVID'S CHRONOLOGY.

St. David's Birth-year and Death-year.—Rhygyvarch, son of a bishop of St. David's in the latter half of the eleventh century, informs us that St. David was 147 years old when he died. In MS. A of the *Annales Cambriae*, St. David is provided with this bare and solitary notice opposite Annus CLVII, *Dauid episcopus moni iu-deorum*, without any indication as to whether it refers to his birth, death, or what not. It is here synchronized with the death of Gregory the Great, between which and the notice of St. David, which follows, Mr. Phillimore thinks that the conjunction *et* has dropped out, so that the passage would have originally run as follows: *Gregorius obiit in christo [et] Dauid episcopus moni iu-deorum*. I am inclined to differ from this and to regard each item as quite distinct from the other, the verb of the second either having dropped out or being involved in the obscure *iu-deorum*. I would suggest that *moni* terminated with *iu* and was followed by some such phrase as *in deo dormit*. In any case the notice has certainly been regarded from of old as referring to the death of St. David, and, as we shall see, the age of David as recorded by Rhygyvarch is partly based on it. In another copy of the *Annales Cambriae* there is also a notice of St. David's birth, which is made to concur with the year 458 and Annus XIV. Now if Annus CLVII of MS. A is calculated from 449, the false Bedan date of the Saxon Advent, as it certainly should be in the case of the obit of Gregory according to Bede, the death of St. David falls in the year (449 plus 156) or 605. Rhygyvarch or one of

¹ The two lives of St. Gildas are printed with translations, notes, etc., in the Rev. Dr. Hugh Williams' *Gildas* (317-413), which work constitutes No. 3 of the *Cymmrodorion Record Series*.

his sources, perceiving this synchronization of David's death with that of Gregory the Great, and accepting A.D. 605 from Bede as the date of the latter event, treated St. David's obit as having also occurred in A.D. 605, from which was subtracted the above quoted year of St. David's birth, viz., 458, with the result that St. David's age at the time of his death was found to be (605 minus 458) or 147 years, as Rhygyvarch says.

Whether Annus CLVII be equated with 601 or 605, the obit of St. David on Tuesday, March 1st, could not have occurred in either of those years, as their March 1st was not a Tuesday, which is a condition postulated by Rhygyvarch's evidence.¹ And that such dates are far too late is shown by the fact that there is a tradition so embedded in the various *vitae* of the saint that he was born thirty years from Patrick's appearance in Ireland as bishop, that it cannot possibly be ignored. Patrick's mission to Ireland as bishop took place in 433, and so the birth of St. David falls in (433 plus 29) or 462; and this is borne out by MS. B of the *Annales Cambriae*, where the birth is equated with Annus XIV. If Annus XIV be computed from the false Bedan date of the Saxon Advent, we arrive at the same year, viz., 449 plus 13=462. On the evidence then before us the year 462 as that of St. David's birth is practically certain; and by 462 is meant our September 1st, 461, to August 31st, 462.

Most of the students, who reject 601 as the year of St. David's obit, are found fluttering for it around those two highly deceptive dates 542 and 547, the reason being as follows. Geoffrey of Monmouth places Arthur's death in 542; in the following chapter (Book xi, ch. 3) he makes Constantine to be crowned as Arthur's successor, and says that *tunc*, at that time, St. David died at St. David's, and was there buried by command of Maelgwn Gwynedd. Now according to the *Annales Cambriae* Maelgwn Gwynedd died in a pestilence, which is placed opposite Annus CIII; and this in the era of that chronicle makes 547. The death of David, therefore, it is argued, must have fallen between 542 and 547; and as the only one of these years, in which March 1st fell on a Tuesday, is 544, this must have been the year in which the saint died.

But alas! for such advocates, the year 542 as that of the Action of Camlan is one of the most illusory of the many in early Welsh history. Based on a miscalculation, it was the result of further miscalculation on the part of Geoffrey, so that it contradicts even the *Annales Cambriae* itself, from which it was taken; and diverges from Geoffrey's own evidence to the extent of half a century!

According to the *Annales Cambriae* the Action of Camlan fell in Annus XCIII, and the pestilence, in which Maelgwn died, in Annus CIII, thus allowing an interval of ten years between these two events. This interval of ten years is supported by the early 13th century tract, entitled *O oes Gwrtheyrn*, which calculates the intervals between leading military events in Welsh history, as distinct from ecclesiastical, from the time of Vortigern to that of King John. [It need hardly be said that the death of Maelgwn was a military event

¹ *tertia feria in kalendis Martii* (Cambro-British Saints, 141); *dyw mawrth ydyd kyntaf o galan mawrth* (Elucidarium, 118; cf. Cambro-British Saints, 116).

of the first importance, as he was the head of the House of Cunedda, and, after Arthur, the greatest soldier of his time.] If this interval of ten years is correct, in other words, if Annus xciii and Annus ciii are to be reckoned from the same initial year, then, as Camlan was fought in 492, the pestilence, in which Maelgwn died, was raging in 502.

In the *Historia Regum Britannice* (Book xi, 3-8) Arthur is made by Geoffrey to be succeeded by Constantine, who is killed in the third year. If we substitute 492, the true date of the Battle of Camlan, for Geoffrey's impossible 542, this would make Constantine's death occur in (492 *plus* 2) or 494. Constantine is succeeded by Aurelius Conanus, who dies in the second year of his reign, that is, in (494 *plus* 1) or 495. Then comes Vortiporius, who reigns till his fourth year, that is (495 *plus* 3) or 498; and then Maelgwn Gwynedd begins to rule as "monarch of the whole island." Unfortunately Geoffrey does not furnish us with the length of Maelgwn's reign, nor does he refer to the pestilence which carried him off.

It has long been noticed, and is indeed well known, that the Constantine, Aurelius Conanus, Vortiporius, and Maelgwn Gwynedd, whom Geoffrey places in this order as monarchs of the whole island of Brittainia after the Battle of Camlan, were four *contemporary* kings ruling in south-west Britain in the days of Gildas, who, in his *Epistola*, rebukes them by name for their shortcomings. Historically, Constantine was king in the Devonian peninsula, Vortiporius in south-west Wales, and Maelgwn in north-west Wales. Geoffrey simply culled four of the five mentioned by Gildas and treated them as successive monarchs of the island of Brittainia, instead of as contemporary kings in Brittainia, that is, in that Brittainia of south-west Britain, which, in Gildas' time, was roughly equivalent to Wales *plus* the Devonian peninsula. Geoffrey, perceiving the interval between the notices of Camlan and Maelgwn, and converting the geographical order of Gildas' kings into an order of time and succession (Maelgwn being last) crowds three kings into the interval, making them kings of the whole island.

I know no reason to doubt the accuracy of the ten years' interval between the Battle of Camlan and the appearance of the plague, in which Maelgwn Gwynedd died. The kings, therefore, rebuked by St. Gildas, were contemporaries of the leaders who fought at Camlan in the last decade of the 5th century. The pestilence, which carried off Maelgwn (before which event the *Epistola Gildae* was written) raged in 502.

If now we accept Geoffrey's statement (Book xi, 3) that St. David died soon after the Battle of Camlan and was buried by Maelgwn's orders at St. David's whilst Maelgwn was still only king of Gwynedd, we should be bound to search for a year, between 492 and 498, when March 1st fell on a Tuesday; and as the only instance of this concurrence in these years is 494, we should be compelled to take 494 as the true year of St. David's obit, although St. David was only thirty-two years of age at the time.

According to Geoffrey (Book xi, 8) Maelgwn Gwynedd, who, as we have seen above, died in the pestilence of 502, was succeeded by Careticus. The number of years that this mysterious Careticus ruled is not given. All that Geoffrey tells us is that he succeeded Maelgwn, so that his reign must have commenced about 502. As

his immediate predecessors according to Geoffrey, namely, Constantine, Aurelius Conanus, Vortiporius, and Maelgwn Gwynedd, were historically contemporary princes ruling in different parts in the last decade of the fifth century, it may be inferred that Careticus also was contemporary with them and ruling in a part of his own. However that may be, Careticus is made to succeed Maelgwn, so that he must have been a younger contemporary. Careticus, therefore, was ruling in the first quarter of the sixth century.

Geoffrey, however, supplies us with this important information relative to Careticus, namely, that with him the Britons lost the *diadema regni*, the crown of the kingdom, and the *insulæ monarchiâ*, the monarchy of the island, but not for ever. They lost it only *multis temporibus*, for a long time, the next holder of the *diadema regni*, according to Geoffrey, being Cadvan, king of Gwynedd, who obtained it immediately after the battle of Chester, which was fought in 616-7. Cadvan is the well-known father of Cadwallon, Penda's ally, who was slain by Oswald in 635. The long time, therefore, *multa tempora*, that the Britons lost the crown, was between the first quarter of the sixth century and the first quarter of the seventh century.

Multa tempora must mean that Careticus died a long time before the battle of Chester; and as Maelgwn, according to Geoffrey, was ruling even before Careticus, the evidence of Geoffrey is here again clearly in favour of an early date in the sixth century for Maelgwn's death. That Geoffrey in this particular is true to history is proved by the fact that Cadvan, whom he makes to fight in the battle of Chester in 616-7, was great-grandson to Maelgwn.

As long as Geoffrey's mysterious Careticus was regarded as flourishing after 547 or so, he remained mysterious indeed, for there is no one in Welsh or English tradition with whom he could be identified. But now that we know that he was ruling in the first quarter of the sixth century, it becomes clear that Careticus is none other than Cerdic of Wessex. Geoffrey certainly meant us to understand that Careticus was a Briton, which seems to be confirmed by his name not only in its British but also in its Saxon form; and to-day there are even English writers who allow "a strain of Welsh blood in the West Saxon royal family" simply and solely on account of this name Cerdic, and others like it, such as Ceadwalla, Mnl, and Cada. If Geoffrey then made a mistake in putting forward Cerdic of Wessex as a Briton, it must be classed by the historians of England with his most excusable errors.

Geoffrey describes Careticus as *amator civiium bellorum*, a lover of civil wars; also *invisus Deo et Brittonibus*, hateful to God and the Britons. Both phrases are significant, especially the last, which is even more significant in the light of the fact that it is the one used of *Saxons* by the author of the *Excidium Britanniae* (ch. 24), who says that they were *Deo hominibusque invisi*, hateful to God and men; and that this is not a mere coincidence is shewn by the fact that Geoffrey's account of the devastation of Britannia in Careticus's time is taken from the very next chapter of the *Excidium Britanniae* (ch. 25).

Geoffrey also associates Careticus with Cirencester and the neighbourhood of the Severn in a passage where he has clearly dragged in incidents concerned with the Scandinavian invasions of Ireland and Britain centuries later. His Gormundus, king of the Africans, who besieged Careticus in the city of Cirencester, is a confused remem-

branch of Guthrum, a leader of *gentiles nigri*, black pagans or Danes, who did occupy Cirencester in 879. Even Giraldus Cambrensis noticed that Geoffrey's Africans were Scandinavians (*Top. of Ireland*, iii, 39).

Now, according to the *Preface* of the *Saxon Chronicle*, Cerdic makes his appearance when 494 years of Christ are over, which is another way of saying 495, and this tallies with the *Chronicle*. About six years after (continues the *Preface*), he began to rule, that is, about 500, and ruled sixteen years, which would bring us to about 516. But the *Chronicle* does not place the commencement of Cerdic's reign till 519, which is made to end in 534. This serious discrepancy, which is really due to computations according to different systems of chronology, so baffled the compiler of the *Chronicle* that in order to fit in the death of Cerdic with what he supposed was the year 534 in the Dionysian era, he actually suppressed the name and reign of Creoda between Cerdic and Cynric, and made the latter to be Cerdic's son instead of his grandson. The annuary numbers, therefore, implied in the *Preface* to the *Saxon Chronicle* for Cerdic's accession and death, are nearer those of the Dionysian system than are the annuary numbers of the *Chronicle*. Mr. W. H. Stevenson has arrived at a similar conclusion relative to the discrepancy between the *Preface* and the *Chronicle*. "This discrepancy (says Mr. Stevenson) may be reconciled by assuming that Cerdic reigned from 500 to 516, Creoda from 516 to 534, and Cynric from the latter date until 560" (*Asser's Alfred*, ed. 1904, p. 159). As Cerdic then succeeded Maelgwn Gwynedd, according to Geoffrey, Maelgwn's death must be thrown back to close about 500; and even if it be insisted that Cerdic began to reign in 519, Maelgwn's obit will still have to be thrown back before the third decade of the sixth century.

What is invariably regarded as the notice of St. David's death is placed in the *Annales Cambriae*, opposite Annus CLVII, which in the era of that chronicle makes (445 plus 156) or 601. As we know the saint to have been born in 462, and to have been contemporary with Maelgwn Gwynedd, who certainly died before the third decade of the sixth century, and is reputed to have arranged the place of the saint's burial, it will be seen that the obit of St. David is post-dated in the *Annales Cambriae* by about a hundred years. Nay, as we have seen strong reason to believe that Maelgwn died in 502, it will be observed that St. David's obit in the *Annales Cambriae* appears to be post-dated by a complete century. Such variations of a complete century are known to have been sometimes made through the misreading of annuary numbers, beginning with D^c or DC., that is, five hundred, as though they represented the normal DC or six hundred. Such a misunderstanding is responsible for this post-dating of St. David's obit by a century in the *Annales Cambriae*, as also for that of St. Dubricius opposite Annus CLXVIII in the same chronicle, with the ridiculous result that the consecrator of St. Samson, Bishop of Dol, is made to die in 612.

If then 601, the equation of Annus CLVII, is a misreading of D^c I or DC. I, that is, 501, the latter must be the year of St. David's obit; but in that year March 1st did not fall on a Tuesday. We have already seen, however, that this notice of St. David is synchronized with the death of Pope Gregory the Great, who, according to Bede, died in 605. Annus CLVII, therefore, is computable not from 445, but

from the false Bedan date of the Saxon Advent, namely, 449, for 449 plus 156 is 605; and this in the case of St. David is a misunderstanding of D^{CV} or DC.V, that is, 505. Now in 505 March 1st falls on a Tuesday.

But we have seen that according to Geoffrey, St. David was buried after the Battle of Camlan by Maelgwn's orders; and as Maelgwn died in the pestilence of 502, St. David must, according to this evidence, have died between 492 and 502; and as 494 is the only year in this interval and even until 505, when March 1st falls on a Tuesday, 494 must, according to Geoffrey, be the true date. This year, however, can in no way be made to tally with Annus CLVII of the *Annales Cambriae*, or with the emendation of the same as Annus LVII.

The fact that Geoffrey avoided giving the number of years in the reigns of Maelgwn and Careticus shows that he failed to reconcile the death year of Maelgwn with the accession year of Careticus. He was face to face with the same difficulty of the year of Cerdic's accession as accosts modern writers. If Cerdic began to rule about six years after 495, as says the *Preface* to the *Saxon Chronicle*, then he was "monarch of the island" at the very time that Maelgwn was supposed to be occupying that august position. If he began to rule in the twenty-fifth year from 495, as says the *Saxon Chronicle* itself, then Maelgwn's supposed sway over the island of Britain must have long passed the death year of St. David, even if this was 505.

Geoffrey's evidence is as follows; in Book ix, ch. 15, he informs us that David, Arthur's *avunculus*, was consecrated Archbishop in succession to St. Dubricius. In Book xi, ch. 3, he tells us that whilst Constantine was reigning "David, the most holy archbishop of Caerlleon, died in the city of Menevia, within his own abbey, which he had loved above the other monasteries of his diocese, because the blessed Patrick, who had foretold his birth, was the founder of it. For while he sojourned there among his brethren, he was taken with a sudden illness and died, and at the command of Maelgwn, king of the Venedotians, was buried in the same church." Now, historically, St. David was never archbishop of Caerlleon, but simply the head of his monastery at St. David's, where he lived, died, and was buried in the natural course. Again, Maelgwn was king of Gwynedd and could have had no jurisdiction in Dyved, where Vortiporius was reigning, much less in the monastery of Mynyw. Geoffrey's statement, therefore, as to Maelgwn Gwynedd's part in St. David's burial may be disregarded. In preference then to 494 we must accept the date, to which the *Annales Cambriae* points, namely, 505. St. David, therefore, on the evidence here quoted, died on Tuesday, March 1st, 505, in the 44th year of his age.
