

550 to 559

How Maelgwn Became King

After the taking of the crown and sceptre of London from the nation of the Cymry, and their expulsion from Lloegyr, they instituted an enquiry to see who of them should be supreme king. The place they appointed was on the Maelgwn sand at Aber Dyvi; and thereto came the men of Gwynedd, the men of Powys, the men of South Wales, of Reinwg of Morganwg, and of d Seisyllwg. And there Maeldav the elder, the son of Ynhwch Unachen, chief of Moel Esgidion in Meirionydd, placed a chair composed of waxed wings under Maelgwn; so when the tide flowed, no one was able to remain, excepting Maelgwn, because of his chair. And by that means Maelgwn became supreme king, with Aberfraw for his principal court; and the earl of Mathraual, and the earl of Dinevwr, and the earl of Caerllion subject to him; and his word paramount over all; and his law paramount, and he not bound to observe their law. And it was on account of Maeldav the elder, that Penardd acquired its privilege, and to be the eldest chancellor-ship.

Caradoc of Llancarfan. The Life of St Gildas

Crossing the Channel, he spent seven years most successfully in further studies in Gaul. At the end of the seventh year he returned to Great Britain with a great mass of books of all kinds. As the reputation of this highly distinguished stranger spread, scholars poured in to him from all sides. From him they heard the science of the Seven Disciplines most subtly explained, by which doctrine students change into teachers, under the teacher's honour.

Gildas the sage

The piety of this wisest of teachers was praised and extolled by all the people of Britain so much, because no one was or could be found to equal him in excellence of character. He fasted like St Anthony the Hermit. When he prayed, this most religious man wore a goatskin. Anything he was given, he immediately spent on the poor. He refrained from the sweetness of milk or honey, and hated meat. He preferred fresh-water vegetables. He used to eat barley bread mixed with ash, and drank spring water every day. The bath-house, a favourite resort of his people, he would not enter. His face looked thin and drawn,

like someone suffering from a serious fever. He used to go and stand stock still in the river, at midnight, for the time it took him to say the Lord's Prayer three times. This done, he used to return to his prayer hut, and there kneel and pray to the Divine Majesty until daybreak. He slept moderately, lying on a rock and wearing only one garment. He ate without reaching fullness, satisfied only with sharing the heavenly reward, for heavenly rewards were all his desire.

Gildas the preacher

He taught people to discount, and warned them to despise, transitory things. He was the most renowned preacher throughout the three kingdoms of Britain. Kings feared him as one they ought to fear, and obeyed him, when they heard from him preaching that they could accept. Every Sunday he used to preach in a church by the seaside, which was in the Pepidiauc region. This was in the time of King Trifinus. Once a vast crowd of the common people came to hear him, and when he began his sermon, his voice held in the words of his preaching. The crowd were amazed at this strange retention. When St Gildas realised what was happening, he told everyone standing there to leave the building, so that he could find out whether one of them was preventing him from preaching the word of God. But even after they had all gone, he was unable to preach. Next, he asked whether anyone, man or woman, was hiding in the church. Nonnital, who was pregnant with the child who was to be St David, said: "I, Nonnital, am here, between the wall and the door. I didn't want to be in the crowd." On hearing this, Gildas told her to leave, and when she had gone he called the people back. They came when he called, to hear the preaching of the Gospel. When the sermon was over, he asked the angel of the Lord about this matter, namely why he had started to preach and couldn't finish. The angel gave him a revelation such as this: "A holy woman called Nonnita is staying in this church. She is about to have a son with immense grace. It is he who kept you from preaching; he held back your words with divine power. The boy who is to come will be born with greater grace. No one in your part of the country will be his equal. I shall leave this region to him. He will grow quickly and flourish from age to age. For a messenger, an angel of the Lord, declared to me his true destiny."

Gildas in Ireland

That is why Gildas, the most holy preacher, crossed to Ireland, where he converted countless people to the catholic faith.

King Arthur

St Gildas was a contemporary of King Arthur, king of all Great Britain. He loved him dearly and always longed to obey him. His twenty-three brothers, however, resisted this

rebel king, refusing to submit to his lordship, and often putting him to flight and driving him out from glade and battlefield. Hueil, the elder brother, who was a constant fighter and very famous soldier, would not obey any king, even Arthur. He used to harry him, provoking the greatest anger between them. He used often to come from Scotland, burning and plundering, and returning with glory and victory. So the King of all Britain, hearing that the great-hearted youth had done such things, and was doing the like, pursued the most victorious youth, who was, according to the talk and hopes of the local inhabitants, going to be an excellent king. After a hostile pursuit they met in battle, and Arthur killed the young brigand on the island of Minau. After that slaughter Arthur returned, happy to have killed his bravest foe. Gildas, the historian of Britain, was still in Ireland at the time, directing studies and preaching in the city of Armagh. He heard of his brother's death at the hands of King Arthur. He grieved at the news, weeping and groaning, as loving brother for loving brother; he prayed for his brother's soul every day, and prayed also for Arthur, carrying out the apostolic command which says: Pray for your persecutors; do good to those who hate you.

Gerald of Wales. In process of time, the Britons, recovering their long-lost population and knowledge of the use of arms, re-acquired their high and ancient character. Let the different areas be therefore marked, and the historical accounts will accord. With regard to Gildas, who inveighs so bitterly against his own nation, the Britons affirm that, highly irritated at the death of his brother, the prince of Albania, whom king Arthur had slain, he wrote these invectives, and upon the same occasion threw into the sea many excellent books, in which he had described the actions of Arthur, and the celebrated deeds of his countrymen; from which cause it arises, that no authentic account of so great a prince is any where to be found.

SBG St Huail. HUAIL is called Cuillus in the Life of Gildas, by the Monk of Rhuis. He was son of Caw ab Geraint ab Erbin, known as Caw of Prydyn. He was obliged to fly with the rest of his family from the North, owing to the incursions and devastations of the Picts and Scots, and was well received by Maelgwn Gwynedd. he may have accompanied Gildas, his brother, to Brittany, he soon wearied of the life of an anchorite and returned to Britain.

In the lolo MSS. 2 he is said to have been a saint of Llancarfan, Huail/was so imprudent as to court a lady of Arthur was enamoured.... The King's suspicions having been aroused, he armed himself secretly, and resolved on observing the movements of his rival.

Having watched him going to the lady's house, some angry words passed between them, and they fought. In a sharp combat, Huail got the better of Arthur, and wounded him in the thigh, whereupon the combat ceased, and they were reconciled, but with the proviso that Huail should never mention the matter, under penalty of losing his head.

Arthur retired to his palace, which was then at Caerwys, in Flintshire, to be cured of his wound. He recovered, but ever after limped a little.

A short time after his recovery, Arthur fell in love with a lady at Ruthin, in Denbighshire, and, in order the more frequently to enjoy her society, he disguised himself in female attire. One day he was dancing with this lady, thus disguised, when Huail happened to see him. He recognized him by the lameness, and said, " This dancing might do very well but for the thigh." Arthur overheard the remark. He withdrew from the dance, and in a fury ordered Huail to be beheaded on a stone called Maen Huail, still standing in S. Peter's Square.. Ruthin.

There was some other cause for disagreement, according to the story of Culhwch and Olwen in the Mabinogion. Huail had stabbed his nephew Gwydre, son of Gwenabwy his sister and of Llwydeu, " and hatred was between Huail and Arthur because of the wound." In the same story it is said that " he never yet made a request at the hand of any lord."

The Rhuis author of the Life of Gildas says that " Cuillus, a very active man of war, after his father's death, succeeded him on the throne." The author of the other Life, supposed to be Caradog of Llancarfan, says : " Huail, the elder brother, an active warrior and most distinguished soldier, submitted to no king, not even to Arthur. He used to harass the latter, and to provoke the greatest anger between them both. He would often swoop down from Scotland, set up conflagrations, and carry off spoils with victory and renown. In consequence, the King of all Britain, on hearing that the high-spirited youth had done such things and was doing similar things, pursued the victorious and excellent youth, who, as the inhabitants used to assert and hope, was destined to become king. In the hostile pursuit and council of war held in the island of Minau (Man), he killed the young plunderer. After that murder the victorious Arthur returned, rejoicing greatly that he had overcome his bravest enemy. Gildas, the historian of the Britons, who was staying in Ireland directing studies and preaching in the city of Armagh, heard that his brother had been slain by Arthur. He was grieved at hearing the news, wept with lamentation, as a dear brother for a dear brother." Gildas at once hastened to Wales, full of resentment and desirous of revenge. " When King Arthur and the chief bishops and abbots of all Britain heard of the arrival of Gildas the Wise, large numbers from among the clergy and people gathered together to reconcile Arthur for the above-mentioned murder." Arthur was obliged to pay

bloodmoney, after which Gildas gave him the Kiss of Peace.

Apparently the Prince Huail was a vulgar marauder, who richly deserved his fate. Arthur was perfectly justified in executing him for his depredations.

SBG St Constantine. CONSTANTINE (Cystennin) was king of Domnonia, comprising Devon and Cornwall, in the sixth century. He was the son of Cador or Cado, Duke of Cornwall. He was unmercifully attacked by Gildas as " the tyrannical whelp of the unclean lioness of Domnonia, Gildas wrote before 547, probably in 540. Consequently, Constantine was then king. The Cambrian Annals give 589 as the date of the conversion of Constantine. The Annals of Tighernach give 588, those of Ulster 587, but as the Ulster Annals are a year behind the true computation, this yields 588.

SBG St Columba. This Saint was a native of Leinster ; his father was King Ninnidh, of the race of Crimthan. He was educated by S. Colman at Clonkeen in Louth, in his earliest youth, and then passed through the hands of S. Finnian of Clonard, where he was a companion of S. Columba of Iona. Thence he started for Rome and Tours, to visit the tombs of the Apostles and of S. Martin. On his way home, he tarried some time in Britain, where he converted a king and all his house. The writer of his Life says that Columba preached to the Saxons,

Columba was returning to Ireland been before 550

On leaving his settlement in Britain, Columba returned to Ireland, where his brother Coirpre gave him a site ; there Columba established a monastery, and placed his disciple Cronan in charge of it.

When S. Finnian of Clonard was dying, in 552. he sent for Columba, who gave him the last Communion.

SBG St Maglorius was a native of Britain, son of Umbrapel and Afrella. . He became a disciple, like Samson, of Illtyd. He was ordained deacon by S. Samson. When Samson crossed into Armorica, Maglorius accompanied him, Samson may have been instituted Metropolitan of all Brittany by Childebert. Maglorius did not want to be Bishop after him..

Loescon, a British settler, occupied Sark, and invited Maglorius to establish himself there, and gave up to him half the island. However, trouble soon arose between Loescon and Maglorius and his monks. He complained that they took more than their share of the fishing and birds and their eggs. After vain attempts to come to a settlement, Loescon, in spite of the angry protests of his wife, gave up the entire islet to Maglorius, who

immediately established thereon an important monastery.

From Sark, Maglorius visited Jersey, where he destroyed a dragon, and was rewarded with a grant of land in that island. But he was not to remain peacefully on the rock of Sark ; a fleet of Saxons came there and attempted to land and plunder the monastery. Maglorius encouraged the natives and his monks to resist, and they drove off the pirates, who lost many lives in the attempt.

In the year 585 there was famine, and the monks on Sark had exhausted their store of grain, and were in some trouble what to do for bread. Eggs they had and fish, but needed the staff of life. One day some little boys in the monastery asked Maglorius to allow them to go down to the beach and play there, where their noise might not disturb the monks. Maglorius consented, and the children went to the port called le Creux. There they found an old boat, got into it, cast it loose, and thought to row about till tired and then return. But the current was too strong for them, and they were carried out to sea. The boys were in a dire fright. Happily the tide was running inland and they were carried to the coast of the mainland, where they told their story, and also mentioned the dearth of corn in the island. \When the King of Domnonia heard of this, he sent for them, and was amused at hearing their adventure. He at once ordered a ship to be laden with corn and sent to Sark to relieve the necessities of the monks. The date of the death of Maglorius is not given, but it must have taken place about 586.

SBG St Tenoï. There are three daughters of Lleuddun Luyddog, the Leudonus who gave name to the provincia of Leudonia, i.e. Lothian, The two first would appear, owing to similarity of names, to have become confounded, for in Scottish hagiography the mother of Kentigern is called Tenew, Thenew, and Taneu, among other forms, which one would be more inclined to equate with Tenoï than Denyw. Her church in Glasgow was once popularly known as S. Theneukes Kirk, which has been corrupted into S. Enoch's.

Lleuddun, was father also of Medrod, who rebelled against his uncle, King Arthur. S. Winefred, leaving Holy well, entered the convent under Theonia,

GILDAS

BRITAIN has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but unrighteous ones; generally engaged in plunder and rapine, but always preying on the innocent; whenever they exert themselves to avenge or protect, it is sure to be in favour of robbers and criminals; they have an abundance of wives, yet are they addicted to fornication and adultery; they are ever ready to take oaths, and as often perjure themselves; they make a

vow and almost immediately act falsely; they make war, but their wars are against their countrymen, and are unjust ones; they rigorously prosecute thieves throughout their country, but those who sit at table with them are robbers, and they not only cherish but reward them; they give alms plentifully, but in contrast to this is a whole pile of crimes which they have committed; they sit on the seat of justice, but rarely seek for the rule of right judgment; they despise the innocent and the humble, but seize every occasion of exalting to the utmost the bloody-minded; the proud, murderers, the combined and adulterers, enemies of God, who ought to be utterly destroyed and their names forgotten.

They have many prisoners in their gaols, loaded with chains, but this is done in treachery rather than in just punishment for crimes; and when they have stood before the altar, swearing by the name of God, they go away and think no more of the holy altar than if it were a mere heap of dirty stones.

Of this horrid abomination, Constantine, the tyrannical whelp of the unclean lioness of Damnonia, is not ignorant.

This same year, after taking a dreadful oath (whereby he bound himself first before God, by a solemn protestation, and then called all the saints, and Mother of God, to witness, that he would not contrive any deceit against his countrymen), he nevertheless, in the habit of a holy abbat amid the sacred altars, did with sword and javelin, as if with teeth, wound and tear, even in the bosoms of their temporal mother, and of the church their spiritual mother, two royal youths, with their two attendants, whose arms, although not eased in armour, were yet boldly used, and, stretched out towards God and his altar, will hang up at the gates of thy city, O Christ, the venerable ensigns of their faith and patience; and when he had done it, the cloaks, red with coagulated blood, did touch the place of the heavenly sacrifice. And not one worthy act could he boast of previous to this cruel deed; for many years before he had stained himself with the abomination of many adulteries, having put away his wife contrary to the command of Christ, the teacher of the world, who hath said: "What God hath joined together, let not man separate," and again: "Husbands, love your wives." For he had planted in the ground of his heart (an unfruitful soil for any good seed) a bitter scion of incredulity and folly, taken from the vine of Sodom, which being watered with his vulgar and domestic impieties, like poisonous showers, and afterwards audaciously springing up to the offence of God, brought forth into the world the sin of horrible murder and sacrilege; and not yet discharged from the entangling nets of his former offences, he added new wickedness to the former.

Go to now, I reprove thee as present, whom I know as yet to be in this life extant. Why standest thou astonished, O thou butcher of shine own soul? Why cost thou wilfully kindle

against thyself the eternal fires of hell? Why cost thou, in place of enemies, desperately stab thyself with shine own sword, with shine own javelin? Cannot those same poisonous cups of offences yet satisfy thy stomach? I look back (I beseech thee) and come to Christ (for thou labourest, and art pressed down to the earth with this huge burden), and he himself, as he said, will give thee rest. Come to him who wisheth not the death of a sinner, but that he should be rather converted and live. Unloose (according to the prophet) the bands of thy neck, O thou son of Sion. Return (I pray thee), although from the far remote regions of sins, unto the most holy Father, who, for his son that will despise the filthy food of swine, and fear a death of cruel famine, and so come back to him again, hath with great joy been accustomed to kill his fatted calf, and bring forth for the wanderer, the first robe and royal ring, and then taking as it were a taste of the heavenly hope, thou shalt perceive how sweet our Lord is. For if thou cost contemn these, be thou assured, thou shalt almost instantly be tossed and tormented in the inevitable and dark floods of endless fire.

. What cost thou also, thou lion's whelp (as the prophet saith), Aurelius Conanus? Art not thou as the former (if not far more foul) to thy utter destruction, swallowed up in the filthiness of horrible murders, fornications, and adulteries, as by an overwhelming flood of the sea? Hast not thou by hating, as a deadly serpent, the peace of thy country, and thirsting unjustly after civil wars and frequent spoil, shut the gates of heavenly peace and repose against thine own soul? Being now left alone as a withering tree in the midst of a field, remember (I beseech thee) the vain and idle fancies of thy parents and brethren, together with the untimely death that befell them in the prime of their youth; and shalt thou, for thy religious deserts, be reserved out of all thy family to live a hundred years, or to attain to the age of a Methusalem? No, surely, but unless (as the psalmist saith) thou shalt be speedily converted unto our Lord, that King will shortly brandish his sword against thee, who hath said by his prophet, "I will kill, and I will cause to live; I will strike, and I will heal; and there is no one who can deliver out of my hand." Be thou therefore shaken out of thy filthy dust, and with all thy heart converted to Him who hath created thee, that "when his wrath shall shortly burn out, thou mayst be blessed by fixing thy hopes on him." But if otherwise, eternal pains will be heaped up for thee, where thou shalt be ever tormented and never consumed in the cruel jaws of hell.

. Thou also, who like to the spotted leopard, art diverse in manners and in mischief, whose head now is growing grey, who art seated on a throne full of deceits, and from the bottom even to the top art stained with murder and adulteries, thou naughty son of a good king, like Manasses sprung from Ezechiah, Vortipore, thou foolish tyrant of the Demetians, why art thou so stiff? What! do not such violent gulfs of sin (which thou dost swallow up

like pleasant wine, nay rather which swallow thee up), as yet satisfy thee, especially since the end of thy life is daily now approaching? Why cost thou heavily clog thy miserable soul with the sin of lust, which is fouler than any other, by putting away thy wife, and after her honourable death, by the base practices of thy shameless daughter? Waste not (I beseech thee) the residue of thy life in offending God, because as yet an acceptable time and day of salvation shines on the faces of the penitent, wherein thou mayest take care that thy flight may not be in the winter, or on the sabbath day. "Turn away (according to the psalmist) from evil, and do good, seek peace and ensue it," because the eyes of our Lord will be cast upon thee, when thou doest righteousness, and his ears will be then open unto thy prayers, and he will not destroy thy memory out of the land of the living; thou shalt cry, and he will hear thee, and out of thy tribulations deliver thee; for Christ cloth never despise a heart that is contrite and humbled with fear of him. Otherwise, the worm of thy torture shall not die, and the fire of thy burning shall never be extinguished.

And thou too, Cuneglasse, why art thou fallen into the filth of thy former naughtiness, yea, since the very first spring of thy tender youth, thou bear, thou rider and ruler of many, and guider of the chariot which is the receptacle of the bear, thou contemner of God, and vilifier of his order, thou tawny butcher, as in the Latin tongue thy name signifies. Why dost thou raise so great a war as well against men as also against God himself, against men, yea, thy own countrymen, with thy deadly weapons, and against God with thine infinite offences? Why, besides thine other innumerable backslidings, having thrown out of doors thy wife, dost thou, in the lust, or rather stupidity of thy mind, against the apostle's express prohibition, denouncing that no adulterers can be partakers of the kingdom of heaven, esteem her detestable sister, who had vowed unto God the everlasting continency, as the very dower (in the language of the poet) of the celestial nymphs? Why cost thou provoke with thy frequent injuries the lamentations and sighs of saints, by thy means corporally afflicted, which will in time to come, like a fierce lioness, break thy bones in pieces? Desist, I beseech thee (as the prophet saith) from wrath, and leave off thy deadly fury, which thou breathest out against heaven and earth, against God and his flock, and which in time will be thy own torment; rather with altered mind obtain the prayers of those who possess a power of binding over this world, when in this world they bind the guilty, and of loosing when they loose the penitent. Be not (as the apostle saith) proudly wise, nor hope thou in the uncertainty of riches, but in God who giveth thee many things abundantly, and by the amendment of thy manners purchase unto thyself a good foundation for hereafter, and seek to enter into that real and true state of existence which will be not transitory but everlasting. Otherwise, thou shalt know and see, yea, in this very world, how bad and

bitter a thing it is for thee to leave the Lord thy God, and not have his fear before shine eyes, and in the next, how thou shalt be burned in the foul encompassing flames of endless fire, nor yet by any manner of means shalt ever die. For the souls of the sinful are as eternal in perpetual fire, as the souls of the just in perpetual joy and gladness.

. And likewise, O thou dragon of the island, who hast deprived many tyrants, as well of their kingdoms as of their lives, and though the last-mentioned in my writing, the first in mischief, exceeding many in power, and also in malice, more liberal than others in giving, more licentious in sinning, strong in arms, but stronger in working thine own soul's destruction, Maglocune, why art thou (as if soaked in the wine of the Sodomitical grape) foolishly rolling in that black pool of shine offences? Why dost thou wilfully heap like a mountain, upon thy kingly shoulders, such a load of sins? Why dost thou show thyself unto the King of kings who hath made thee as well in kingdom as in stature of body higher than almost all the other chiefs of Britain) not better likewise in virtues than the rest; but on the contrary for thy sins much worse? Listen then awhile and hear patiently the following enumeration of thy deeds, wherein I will not touch any domestic and light offences (if yet any of them are light) but only those open ones which are spread far and wide in the knowledge of all men. Didst not thou, in the very beginning of thy youth, terribly oppress with sword, spear, and fire, the king shine uncle, together with his courageous bands of soldiers, whose countenances in battle were not unlike those of young lions? Not regarding the words of the prophet, who says, "The blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days," and even if the sequel of thy sins were not such as ensued, yet what retribution couldst thou expect for this offence only at the hands of the just Judge, who hath said by his prophet: "Woe be to thee who spoilest, and shalt not thou thyself be spoiled? and thou who killest, shalt not thyself be killed? and when thou shalt make an end of thy spoiling, then shalt thou thyself fall."

. But when the imagination of thy violent rule had succeeded according to thy wishes, and thou wast urged by a desire to return into the right way, night and day the consciousness of thy crimes afflicted thee, whilst thou didst ruminare on the Lord's ritual and the ordinances of the monks, and then publish to the world and vow thyself before God a monk with no intention to be unfaithful, as thou didst say, having burst through those toils in which such great beasts as thyself were used to become entangled, whether it were love of rule, of gold, or silver, or, what is stronger still, the fancies of thy own heart. And didst thou not, as a dove which cleaves the yielding air with its pinions, and by its rapid turns escapes the furious hawk, safely return to the cells where the saints repose, as a most certain place of refuge? Oh how great a joy should it have been to our mother

church, if the enemy of all mankind had not lamentably pulled thee, as it were, out of her bosom! Oh what an abundant flame of heavenly hope would have been kindled in the hearts of desperate sinners, hadst thou remained in thy blessed estate! Oh what great rewards in the kingdom of Christ would have been laid up for thy soul against the day of judgment, if that crafty wolf had not caught thee, who of a wolf wast now become a lamb (not much against thine own will) out of the fold of our Lord, and made thee of a lamb, a wolf like unto himself, again? Oh how great a joy would the preservation of thy salvation have been to God the Father of all saints had not the devil, the father of all castaways, as an eagle of monstrous wings and claws, carried I thee captive away against all right and reason, to the unhappy band of his children? And to be short, thy conversion to righteousness gave as great joy to heaven and earth, as now thy detestable return, like a dog to his vomit, breedeth grief and lamentation: which being done, "the members which should have been busily employed, as the armour of justice for the Lord, are now become the armour of iniquity for sin and the devil;" for now thou dost not listen to the praises of God sweetly sounded forth by the pleasant voices of Christ's soldiers, nor the instruments of ecclesiastical melody, but thy own praises (which are nothing) rung out after the fashion of the giddy rout of Bacchus by the mouths of thy villainous followers, accompanied with lies and malice, to the utter destruction of the neighbours, so that the vessel prepared for the service of God, is now turned to a vessel of dirt, and what was once reputed worthy of heavenly honour, is now cast as it deserves into the bottomless pit of hell.

. Yet neither is thy sensual mind (which is overcome by the excess of thy follies) at all checked in its course with committing so many sins, but hot and prone (like a young colt that coveteth every pleasant pasture) runneth headlong forward, with irrecoverable fury, through the intended fields of crime, continually increasing the number of its transgressions. For the former marriage of thy first wife (although after thy violated vow of religion she was not lawfully thine, but only by right of the time she was with thee), was now despised by thee, and another woman, the wife of a man then living, and he no stranger, but thy own: brother's son, enjoyed thy affections. Upon which occasion that stiff neck of thine (already laden with sins) is now burdened with two monstrous murders, the one of thy aforesaid nephew, the other, of her who once was thy wedded wife: and thou art now from low to lower, and from bad to worse, bowed, bent, and sunk down into the lowest depth of sacrilege. Afterwards, also didst thou publicly marry the widow by whose deceit and suggestion such a heavy weight of offences was undergone, and take her, lawfully, as the flattering tongues of thy parasites with false words pronounced it, but as we say, most wickedly, to be thine own in wedlock. And therefore what holy man is there, who, moved

with the narration of such a history, would not presently break out into weeping and lamentations? What priest (whose heart lieth open unto God) would not instantly, upon hearing this, exclaim with anguish in the language of the prophet: "Who shall give water to my head, and to my eyes a fountain of tears, and I will day and night bewail those of my people, who are slaughtered." For full little (alas!) hast thou with thine ears listened to that reprehension of the prophet speaking in this wise: "Woe be unto you, O wicked men, who have left the law of the most holy God, and if ye shall be born, your portion shall be to malediction, and if ye die, to malediction shall be your portion, all things that are from the earth, to the earth shall be converted again, so shall the wicked from malediction pass to perdition:" if they return not unto our Lord, listening to this admonition: "Son, thou hast offended; add no further offence thereunto, but rather pray for the forgiveness of the former." And again, "Be not slow to be converted unto our Lord, neither put off the same from day to day, for his wrath doth come suddenly." Because, as the Scripture saith, "When the king heareth the unjust word, all under his dominion become wicked." And, the just king (according to the prophet) raiseth up his region. But warnings truly are not wanting to thee, since thou hast had for thy instructor the most eloquent master of almost all Britain. Take heed, thereof, lest that which Solomon noteth, befall thee, which is, "Even as he who stirreth up a sleeping man out of his heavy sleep, so is that person who declareth wisdom unto a fool, for in the end of his speech will he say, What hast thou first spoken? Wash thine heart (as it is written) from malice, O Jerusalem, that thou mayest be saved." Despise not (I beseech thee) the unspeakable mercy of God, calling by his prophet the wicked in this way from their offences: "I will on a sudden speak to the nation, and to the kingdom, that I may root out, and disperse, and destroy, and overthrow." As for the sinner he doth in this wise exhort him vehemently to repent. "And if the same people shall repent from their offence, I will also repent of the evil which I have said that I would do unto them." And again, "Who will give them such an heart, that they may hear me, and keep my commandments, and that it may be well with them all the days of their lives." And also in the Canticle of Deuteronomy, "A people without counsel and prudence, I wish they would be wise, and understand, and foresee the last of all, how one pursueth a thousand and two put to flight ten thousand." And again, our Lord in the gospel, "Come unto me, all ye who do labour and are burdened, and I will make you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and ye shall find repose for your souls." For if thou turn a deaf ear to these admonitions, contemn the prophets, and despise Christ, and make no account of us, humble though we be, so long as with sincere piety and purity of mind we bear in mind that saying of the prophet, that we may not be

found, "Dumb dogs, not able to bark;" (however I for my part may not be of that singular fortitude in the spirit and virtue of our Lord, as to declare, "To the house of Jacob their sins, and the house of Israel their offences;") and so long as we shall remember that of Solomon, "He who says that the wicked are just, shall be accursed among the people, and odious to nations, for they who reprove them shall have better hopes." And again, "Respect, not with reverence thy neighbour in his ruin, nor forbear to speak in time of salvation." And as long also as we forget not this, "Root out those who are led to death, and forbear not to redeem them who are murdered;" because, as the same prophet says, "Riches shall not profit in the day of wrath, but justice delivereth from death." And, "If the just indeed be hardly saved, where shall the wicked and sinner appear? If as I said, thou scorn us, who obey these texts, the dark flood of hell shall without doubt eternally drown thee in that deadly whirlpool, and those terrible streams of fire that shall ever torment and never consume thee, and then shall the confession of thy pains and sorrow for thy sins be altogether too late and unprofitable to one, who now in this accepted time and day of salvation deferreth his conversion to a more righteous way of life.

About 550 PROCOPIUS

In this island of Brittia the men of old built a long wall, cutting off a large part of it, and the air and the soil and everything else is different on the two sides of it. For to the east of the wall there is healthy air, changing with the seasons, moderately warm in summer and cold in winter, and many men dwell there, living in the same way as other men, and the trees are rich in fruit which ripens at the appropriate season and the crops flourish as well as any others and the land seems to boast of its abundance of water. But on the other side everything is the opposite of this, so that it is impossible for a man to live there for half an hour, but the viper and innumerable snakes and all kinds of other wild beasts occupy the place as their own; and strangest of all, the natives say that if a man crosses the wall and goes to the other side, he forthwith dies, unable to bear the pestilential nature of the air there, and likewise death meets and overtakes wild beasts that go there. Now since I have reached this point in my account, I must relate a rather fabulous story, which did not seem at all trustworthy to me... (here follows an account of how the souls of the dead were ferried to Brittia from villages on the coast of Europe)

(Ed. The above is from ALF Rivet & Collin Smith, The Place Names of Roman Britain. The following may be the missing passage and is from an anonymous page on Wikipedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brittia>)

"They imagine that the souls of the dead are transported to that island. On the coast of

the continent there dwell under Frankish sovereignty, but hitherto exempt from all taxation, fishers and farmers, whose duty it is to ferry the souls over. This duty they take in turn. Those to whom it falls on any night, go to bed at dusk; at midnight they hear a knocking at their door, and muffled voices calling. Immediately they rise, go to the shore, and there see empty boats, not their own but strange ones, they go on board and seize the oars. When the boat is under way, they perceive that she is laden choke-full, with her gunwhales hardly a finger's breadth above water. Yet they see no one, and in an hour's time they touch land, which one of their own craft would take a day and a night to do. Arrived at Brittia, the boat speedily unloads, and becomes so light that she only dips her keel in the wave. Neither on the voyage nor at landing do they see any one, but they hear a voice loudly asking each one his name and country. Women that have crossed give their husbands' names."

6th cent Stephanus of Byzantium

Aebudae, five islands of Pretannike as Marcian states in his Periplus. The ethnic is Aebudaeus.

Albion, a Prettanic island, Marcian in his Periplus of it. The ethnic is Albionus.

Brettia, an island in the Adriatic, contains the river Brettion. The Greeks call it Elaphoussa, but some call it Brettanis. The ethnic is Brettianus.

There are also Brettanides islands in the ocean, whose ethnic is Brettani.

Dionysius Periegetes omits one -t- when he says "the cold flood of ocean flows where dwell the Bretani". And others spell them with a P-, Pretanides islands, as Marcian and Ptolomy.

Briges, a Thracian people, Herodutus in his seventh book says "The Phrygians, as the Macedonians say, are called Briges". And Trojan Brigia, that is Phrygia, is from Brigos, dwelling in Macedonia. Herodian (the grammarian, not the historian) in his first book on the declension of nouns says they are Brigantes, for nouns terminating in -gas decline isosyllabically only when they are proper names (not ethnic): I say this of the name Brigas. There is a Brettanic people, the.....(lacuna).

Thule, a large island in the ocean towards the Hyperborean regions, where the sun makes the summer days 20 equinoctial hours long, the night four, and the opposite in winter. The ethnic is Thulaeus, or equally Thulites.

Ierne, an island on the edge of the world towards the west. The ethnic is Iernaesus, like Iernaesus.

Ivernia, a Pretanic island, the lesser of the two. The ethnic is Iverniates.

Kassitera, an island in the ocean, near India, as Dionysius in his *Bassarica*; from which comes tin.

Lindonion, a city of Brettania: Marcian in his *Periplus*. The ethnic is Lindoninus.

Pretanike, an island like a continent, next to Gaul. The inhabitants are called Pretani.

551. CRONICUM SCOTORUM

A great mortality i.e. the Crom Conaill, in which these saints rested i.e. Finnian i.e. of Cluain Iraird moccu Teldub and Colam son of Crimthann, Colam of Inis Celtra, Sinchell son of Cenannán abbot of Cell Achaid Druimfhata, and Mac Táil of Cell Cuilinn who is called Eógan son of Corcrán.

SBG St David. Except when compelled by unavoidable necessity, David kept aloof from all temporal concerns. He did not attend the Synod of Llanddewi Brefi when convened by Dyfrig. As no agreement could be arrived at relative to matters in dispute, Paulinus, with whom David had studied, advised that he should be sent for, and Dyfrig and Deiniol went in quest of him, and insisted on his attending the Council. On his arrival, David found the Synod gathered in a very incommodious place, the old Roman station of Loventium, and by his advice it was removed a little distance to Llanddewi Brefi, where was a mound, upon which the speakers could stand and be heard by those whom they desired to address. Such, we may take it, is the meaning of the legend which represents David having mounted a heap of clothes, whereupon the earth swelled under it into a mount.

Rhygyfarch and Giraldus both misrepresent the Council as one convened for the suppression of the Pelagian heresy. But it was really called together to enact canons of discipline for the clergy and laity. The canons have been preserved in a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris.

A second Council was held later, the Synod of Victory, in 569, according to the *Annales Cambrice*, but, as we have shown in dealing with S. Cadoc, the date of the Council of Brefi must be put before the outbreak of the Yellow Plague, probably in 544 or 545.

Outbreak of the Yellow Plague. Goes to Brittany with S Teilo, and settles in Leon and makes foundations there .c 547 was in Leon when the Yellow Pestilence raged in Britain, 547-550 ; We consider it not unlikely that it was during this period that S. Non died.

This residence in Leon may have misled Giraldus into supposing that David was at one time in Caerleon, and so have given rise to the preposterous fable that he had been

archbishop there.

If it be allowed that David was in Leon at this time, then his return to Menevia would be about 551. He was engaged for some years in founding churches throughout South Wales.

551. Annals of the Four Masters The thirteenth year of Diarmaid. St. Neasan, the leper, died. Feargna, son of Aenghus, King of Ulidia, was slain in the battle of Druim Cleithe, by Deman, son of Caireall, and by the Ui Eathach Arda.

551 Annals of Ulster . Repose of Dáuíd of Farannán, son of Guaire descendant of Farannán, bishop of Ard Macha and legate of all Ireland.

551. Annals of Inisfallen. The Crom Connail, i.e., a great plague.

552.. Repose of Finnián of Cluain Iraird; and Colum of Tír dá Glas rested.

552 Annals of Ulster The battle of Cuilen in which the Corco Óche of Mumu perished through the prayers of Ita of Cluain Credail. Death of Fothad son of Conall.

552. Annals of the Four Masters The fourteenth year of Diarmaid. The church of Bennchar was founded by Comhgall of Beannchar. The feast of Teamhair was made by the King of Ireland, Diarmaid, son of Fearghus Ceirbheoil. The killing of Colman Mor, son of Diarmaid, in his chariot, by Dubhshlat Ua Treana, one of the Cruithni.

552 ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE. This year Cynric fought with the Britons on the spot that is called Sarum, and put them to flight. Cerdic was the father of Cynric, Cerdic was the son of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis, Gewis of Wye, Wye of Frewin, Frewin of Frithgar, Frithgar of Brand, Brand of Balday, Balday of Woden. In this year Ethelbert, the son of Ermenric, was born, who on the two and thirtieth year of his reign received the rite of baptism, the first of all the kings in Britain.

Ethelwerd's Chronicle Five years after, Cenric fought against the Britons near the town of Scarburh [Salisbury?], and, having routed them, slew a large number.

553 Annals of Ulster Death of Eochu son of Conlaed i.e. king of Ulaid, in whom the Uí Echach Ulad originate; and death of Béc son of Deiche. Death of Crimthann son of Brion. I

have found this in the Book of Cuanu: The relics of Patrick were placed sixty years after his death in a shrine by Colum Cille. Three splendid halidoms were found in the burial-place: his goblet, the Angel's Gospel, and the Bell of the Testament. This is how the angel distributed the halidoms: the goblet to Dún, the Bell of the Testament to Ard Macha, and the Angel's Gospel to Colum Cille himself. The reason it is called the Angel's Gospel is that Colum Cille received it from the hand of the angel. Or here, the repose of Dáuid; bishop of Ard Macha and legate.

553.CRONICUM SCOTORUM Death of Eochu son of Conlaed king of Ulaid from whom are descended the Uí Echach Ulad. Death of Béc son of Dé, a prophet.

Birth of MoLua moccu Óchae. A pestilence called the samthrosch.

553.Annals of Inisfallen. The battle of Cuilen gained by the Corcu Oche through the prayer of Íte.

SBG St Kyndeyrn.

Shortly after this Morken died, but his successors were still more hostile to Kentigern, and he, believing that a conspiracy had been formed to murder him, fled to Wales. The account in the Red Book of S. Asaph makes Kentigern escape from Morken. On his way south, he halted at Carleolum (or Carlisle), and there learned thatpaganism still lingered in the mountainous parts near. He turned aside, and did good mission work. At the headquarters where he preached, he planted a cross, and the place is now called Crosthwaite.

Then he resumed his journey, and going out of his way, collected a harvest of souls. At length he arrived in Menevia, and remained some time with S. David.

His fame having reached Cathwallanus in North Wales, that prince invited him to his dominions.

Kentigern travelled with a great body of monks and military men. Cadwallon bade him select any place he liked for his settlement. One day Kentigern saw a wild boar pawing and tearing up the turf with his tusks near the river Elwy, and he resolved on fixing his abode there.

All went on smoothly for a while, but when Maelgwn succeeded to his father, troubles began. Maelgwn did not relish having so large a colony planted in his territory, and made difficulties. Joscelyn calls the king" quidam regulus nomine Melconde Galganu," but there can be no question that Maelgwn is intended. The account of the monastery, which is

given with detail, is interesting, but we do not know to what an extent it was coloured by Joscelyn. Kentigern 's foundation attracted great numbers of all ranks and ages, and it was filled with 965 monks. These he divided into three bands ; 300 who were illiterate were deputed to take care of the cattle and till the fields ; 300 were set apart to perform household duties within the monastery ; the remaining 365 were devoted to the sacred offices, which were continued without intermission, day and night. He may have paid a visit to Rome.

554. Annals of Inisfallen. Justinian dies. Justin reigned.

554. Annals of the Four Masters The sixteenth year of Diarmaid.

St. Cathub, son of Fearghus, Abbot of Achadh Cinn, died on the 6th of April. One hundred and fifty years was the length of his life. The last feast of Teamhair was made by Diarmaid, King of Ireland. Curnan, son of Aedh, son of Eochaidh Tirmcharna, i. e. the son of the King of Connaught, was put to death by Diarmaid, son of Cearbhall, in violation of the guarantee and protection of Colum Cille, having been forcibly torn from his hands, which was the cause of the battle of Cul Dreimhne.

554 Annals of Ulster Birth of Lugaid moccu Óchae. A pestilence i.e. leprosy called the sámthrosca.

555. Annals of the Four Masters The seventeenth year of Diarmaid. The battle of Cul Dreimhne was gained against Diarmaid, son of Cearbhall, by Fearghus and Domhnall, the two sons of Muirheartach, son of Earca; by Ainmire, son of Sedna; and by Ainnidh, son of Duach; and by Aedh, son of Eochaidh Tirmcharna, King of Connaught. It was in revenge of the killing of Curnan, son of Aedh, son of Eochaidh Tirmcharna, while under the protection of Colum Cille, the Clanna Neill of the North and the Connaughtmen gave this battle of Cul Dreimhne to King Diarmaid; and also on account of the false sentence which Diarmaid passed against Colum Cille about a book of Finnen, which Colum had transcribed without the knowledge of Finnen, when they left it to award of Diarmaid, who pronounced the celebrated decision, 'To every cow belongs its calf,' &c. Colum Cille said:

1. O God, wilt thou not drive off the fog,

[gap: extent: 1 line]

which envelopes our number,

The host which has deprived us of our livelihood,

2. The host which proceeds around the cars!

He is a son of storm who betrays us.

My Druid,—he will not refuse me,—

is the Son of God, and may he side with me;

3. How grandly he bears his course,

the steed of Baedan before the host;

Power by Baedan of the yellow hair

will be borne from Ireland on him the steed.

Fraechan, son of Teniusan, was he who made the Erbhe Druadh for Diarmaid. Tuathan, son of Dimman, son of Saran, son of Cormac, son of Eoghan, was he who placed the Erbhe Druadh over his head. Three thousand was the number that fell of Diarmaid's people. One man only fell on the other side, Mag Laim was his name, for it was he that passed beyond the Erbhe Druadh.

SBG St Brendan. In 555, Brendan founded Clonfert. It was the year of the battle of Cuidreihmne, in which Aedh of Connaught fought and defeated Diarmid Mac Cearbhall.

555 Annals of Ulster Cathub son of Fergus, bishop of Achad Cinn, died. Colmán Mór son of Diarmait Derg son of Fergus Cerrbél son of Conall of Cremthann son of Niall Naígiállach—whom Dub Sloit killed. The church of Bennchor was founded.

555. CRONICUM SCOTORUM Cathub son of Fergus, bishop of Achad Chinn, rested in the 150th year of his age. Pope Vigilius rested.

SBG St Geraint. St Teilo takes a stone sarcophagus from Brittany to Cornwall for the sick King Geriant of Cornwall

556 ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE. This year Cynric and Ceawlin fought with the Britons at Beranbury.

Ethelwerd's Chronicle The same, four years afterwards, fought with Ceawlin against the Britons, near a place called Berin-byrig [Banbury ?]

555. Annals of Inisfallen. Repose of Cathbad, i.e. a noble bishop of Leth Cuinn.

556.. Nistan the leper died.

556 Annals of Ulster Pelagius, a Roman, by birth, sat 11 years and 18 days. He was buried in the basilica of St Peter the Apostle. A great mortality this year, i.e. in chron Chonaill (in buide Chonaill).

Pelagius 1 Pope 556-561

556. Annals of the Four Masters The eighteenth year of Diarmaid. The battle of Cuil Uinnsenn, in Teathbha, was fought against Diarmaid, by Aedh, son of Breanainn, chief of Teathbha; and Diarmaid was routed from the field of battle.

557. Annals of the Four Masters The nineteenth year of Diarmaid. St. Bec, son of De, a celebrated prophet, died. Colum Cille went to Scotland, where he afterwards founded a church, which was named from him. St. Aedhan O'Fiachrach died.

The battle of Moin Doire Lothair was gained over the Cruithnigh, by the Ui Neill of the North, i. e. by the Cinel Conaill and Cinel Eoghain, wherein fell seven chieftains of the Cruithnigh, together with Aedh Breac; and it was on this occasion that the Lee and Carn Eolaire were forfeited to the Clanna Neill of the North. Ceannfaeladh composed the following:

1. Sharp weapons were strewn, men were strewn,
in Moin Mor Doire Lothair,
Because of a partition not just;
the seven kings of the Cruithni, with Aedh Breac, were in the slaughter.
2. The battle of all the Cruithne was fought,
and Elne was burned.
The battle of Gabbra Liffe was fought,
and the battle of Cul Dreimhne.
3. They bore away hostages after conflict,
thence westwards towards Cnuas Nuach,
Fearghus, Domhnall, Ainmire,
and Nainnidh, son of Duach.
4. The two sons of Mac Earca
returned to the same battle,
And the king, Ainmire,
returned into the possessions of his father Seadna.

557. CRONICUM SCOTORUM The killing of Fergna son of Ibdach, king of Ulaid, in the battle of Druim Cleithe, by Demán son of Cairell and the Uí Echach of Ard. Nessán the leper rested.

557 Annals of Ulster Kalends of January second feria, fourteenth of the moon. Death of Fergna or Fiacha descendant of Ibdach, king of Ulaid.

557. Annals of Inisfallen. Death of Fergna, king of Ulaid.

558. The church of Bennchor was founded.

558 Annals of Ulster The killing of Colmán Mór, son of Diarmait, by Dub Sloit. The Feast of Temair held by Diarmait son of Cerball; and the flight before Máelchá's son; and the death of Gabrán son of Domangart. Brénainn founded a church in Cluain Ferta. (Death of Eochu son of Conlaed, king of Ulaid. Death of the prophet Béc son of Dé).

558 Annales Cambriae The death of Gabrán, son of Dungart.

SBG St Lluan Her name occurs in the later documents as Lleian, was a daughter of Brychan Brycheiniog. 2 She became the wife of Gafran abDyfnwal Hen, who died in 558, by whom she was the mother of the celebrated Aidan mac Gabran of the Irish annals, known to Welsh tradition as Aeddan Fradog, or the Treacherous. Aidan was made King of the Dalriad Scots of Argyle by S. Columba in 574, being the first independent King of the Scots. He was an enterprising and aggressive king, for we find him making an expedition to the Orkneys in 579 and to Man in 582. He died in 606. In the Welsh Triads 3 he is branded as one of " the Three Arrant Traitors of the Isle of Britain," because he deserted his own countrymen and went over to the Saxons. The others were Gwrgi Garwlwyd and Medrod (Mordred); and the three were the cause, it is said, of the Welsh losing the sovereignty of the Isle.

SBG St Gafran Gafran was in reality the father of Aeddan, and not his son. Aeddan was the celebrated king of Scotch Dalriada, known in the Irish annals as Aidan mac Gabran, who died in 606. Gafran died, according to the Annales Cambriae, in 558. Legend has woven itself around him. In the Triads he is the head of a retinue designated one of the " Three Faithful Retinues (Diwair Deulu) of the Isle of Britain." The references to them

in the two earliest series are rather ambiguous; they showed their faithfulness " when the utter loss took place ; " " when the utter loss took place they went to (or, into the) sea for their lord." In the third and latest series the incident is described as one of the " Three Utter Losses of the Isle of Britain." Gafran and his men " went to sea in search of Gwerddonau Lli'on (the Green Isles of the Ocean), and were never afterwards heard of". They numbered 2,100.

Where are the sons of Gavran ? where his tribe,
The faithful ? following their beloved chief,
They the Green Islands of the Ocean sought ;
Nor human tongue hath told, nor human ear,
Since from the silver shores they went their way,
Hath heard their fortunes.

558. CRONICUM SCOTORUM The killing of Colmán Mór son of Diarmait, in his own chariot, by Dub Sloit hu Trena. The church of Bennchor was founded.

Brénainn founded the church of Cluain Ferta. Since Mac Ua Eltai possessed it— Brenainn, with all his perfections— If not the better, not the worse therefor, From that time to this has Cluain Ferta been.

Brénainn went up in the air in his chariot.

558. Annals of the Four Masters After Diarmaid, the son of Fearghus Cerrbheoil, had been twenty years in sovereignty over Ireland, he was slain by Aedh Dubh, son of Suibhne, King of Dal Araidhe, at Rath Beag, in Magh Line. His head was brought to Cluain Mic Nois, and interred there, and his body was interred at Connor. In this year was taken the Mermaid, i.e. Liban, the daughter of Eochaidh, son of Muireadh, on the strand of Ollarbha, in the net of Beoan, son of Inli, the fisherman of Comhgall of Beannchair.

559. Annals of the Four Masters The first year of the two sons of Muircheartach, son of Muireadhach, in the kingdom of Ireland, i.e. Domhnall and Fearghus.

The battle of Gabhra Liffe, and the battle of Dumha Aichir, by Domhnall and Fearghus, against the Leinstermen, of which was said:

1. The battle of Gabhra and the battle of Dumha Achair,
Illustrious men fell in both, Colgu and his father.
2. The battle of Gabhra was not a battle with the loss of a man or two hundred;
There fell twenty from Faelan, from Ailill twenty times twenty.

559 Annals of Ulster The church of Bennchor was founded.

559. Annals of Inisfallen. Death of Colmán Mór, son of Diarmait.