

CHAPTER XIX.

WALES.

Ethnology of Wales—Romans in Wales—The Ancient Welsh Kingdoms—Etymology of 'Llan'—Relations of Wales with Ireland—The Churchyard of Eglwys Cymmin; Reconstruction of the Facts—Welsh Monasticism borrowed from Ireland—The making of the 'Llan'—SS. Cadoc, Gwynlliw, and Illtyd—Circular Churchyards in Wales—Llanelwedd—Monastic Settlements of Irish Type—St. Cybi—The 'Mynwent'—The Right of Sanctuary—Early Dedications—Poem of 'The Warriors' Graves'—Various Forms of these Graves—The Mynwent again.

Prior to the Roman conquest the population of Wales closely resembled that of contemporary Ireland, and its speech was uniformly Goidelic. In the north of the country the Brythonic Ordovices, the 'Hammer-men,' had already begun to find a footing, but had not yet reached so far as Anglesey when the Romans interfered. After the departure of the Romans the Brythonisation of the country was resumed vigorously. Modern Welsh is a wholly Brythonic speech, but the idiom of the south is still markedly different from that of the north, and the difference between the two is due probably to a racial difference older than the subsequent infusions of English, Norman,

and Flemish which have accentuated it. North Wales is relatively New Wales. For the older Wales one must go to the extreme south, to Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, whose affinities are with the Irish Goidels beyond the sea.¹

The view that the Romans never effectually penetrated into such part of Wales as lies west of a line drawn through the meridian of Maridunum (Carmarthen) is now abandoned.² There was never any convincing reason why they should have left unoccupied what is now Pembrokeshire, while its fertility, its many convenient harbours and waterways, and the constant need of defending these from the attacks of Irish pirates,³ are very strong reasons to the contrary.⁴ Very probably this district, being a remote and outlying part of the country, enjoyed but a minor share of Roman patronage, and for the same reasons lost the traces thereof more speedily than did more favoured districts nearer to the main centres and arteries of administration. The Romanisation of the rest of the principality was certainly more complete, yet even there it seems to have been superficial only. Fortresses were built and roads were constructed in the customary Roman way, but beneath the Roman military system the national life went on largely unchanged.⁵ If even in remote Dyfed the upper class became bi-lingual, as inscriptions prove, neither there nor elsewhere did the native speech perish; and if the wild character of the country militated against

¹ Lloyd, *History of Wales*, i, ch. 2. It was in the extreme north-west (Mona) that British Druidism found its last asylum. The counties of Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire correspond to the old Welsh kingdom of Dyfed (Demetia), and the earlier race was also very strong in Deheubarth, the 'South Land' of the Silures, which included Glamorganshire. In Pembrokeshire, says Lloyd (i, 25), 'neolithic ideas survived until a late period.' The presence of disc-barrows at Pendoylan (ch. iii) points however to an infiltration of Brythonic blood into Glamorganshire at a date possibly, not necessarily, prior to the arrival of the Romans, and in Pembrokeshire and Gower are some faint traces of settlements made by peoples akin to the Saxons. See Nennius, § 14, with *A.-S. Chronicle*, anno 918.

² *Antiquaries' Journal*, iii (1923), p. 265. In *Arch. Camb.* 7th ser. iii (1923), p. 21, Dr. Mortimer Wheeler shews that the belief of some of the older antiquaries, that there stood a Roman station (*Ad Vigesium*) at Castle Flemish in Pembrokeshire, was founded on fact.

³ See Stokes, *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, pp. 16 sqq. Both the Irish settlements in South Wales and West Wales (Somerset, Devon and Cornwall), and the migration of the Scoti from Ulster to Argyllshire, probably belong to the fourth century, in which flourished also Niall of the Nine Hostages, King of All Ireland (358-366).

⁴ cf. Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itinerary through Wales*, i, 12.

⁵ Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, i, pp. 64 sqq. 84-89.

any very complete Romanisation of the people, it has at the same time preserved to an extent as yet little appreciated much of what the Roman wrought, and especially his roads.¹

It was not the Roman's way violently to interfere with the social and religious organisations of his subjects. In Britain, and therefore in Wales, an exception had to be made to this rule in so far as Druidism was a political force; but there is no proof, and as little likelihood, that the old religion was banned when Druidism was broken. When presently Christianity was emancipated (311), the natives might hide, but they would certainly not altogether forget, the ritual and the practices of the older religion; and when the Romans withdrew the old faith would struggle to lift up its head again.² But the opportunity was too transient: Christianity had already taken root,³ and when it was menaced by the recrudescence of paganism from within and by the attacks of Picts and Saxons from without, the threatened lapse was countered and defeated by the joint efforts of the Gallican and the Irish Churches. The 'emotional Celt' of Wales became in the sixth century a more earnest Christian than he had ever been, and the forces which would have revived the older faith were cleverly moulded to introduce into Wales a monasticism precisely like that of Ireland, until Wales also overflowed with 'saints.' Probably the strong and persistent Goidelic element in Wales was largely responsible for the fact.⁴

From very early times the people of Wales had been organised on an elaborate system of *trefts* and *cantrefes*, their lands on an equally thorough system of *maenwrs*. As these have no discoverable relation to anything Roman,

¹ Down to the fourteenth century Wales remained entirely a pastoral country, in which roads would be of little use, and would therefore tend to disappear much more rapidly than in Saxon England with its settled, if rude, village life. Leland, *Itin.* v, 54: 'There is no place yn al these commotes where the people dwell *vicatim*, but al *sparsim*.'

² 'There is no mention of British Druids after the conquest of Mona until (Nennius, § 40) Vortigern, excommunicated by Germanus, invites to his help druids, who

probably came from North Britain.' E. C. Quiggin in *Encycl. Brit. s.v. DRUIDS*.

³ 'Rome's parting gift of a new religion was the greatest of all she bestowed' on Wales. Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, i, 89.

⁴ Girald. Cambr. *Description of Wales*, i, 18: 'They show a greater respect than other nations to churches and persons belonging to the Church, to the relics of saints, bells, holy books, and the Cross. . . Nowhere will you find hermits and anchorites more ascetic and more spiritual.' So even in the devout twelfth century the devoutness of the Welsh was remarkable.

and as we have no knowledge of any later period of history wherein one powerful central monarchy might be conceived to have introduced them, one is obliged to assume that these were survivals from an earlier time. *Tref* and *cantref*, being founded originally upon the fluid fact of population—not until the thirteenth century did the population of Wales even begin to assume a stable condition—have disappeared; the *maenwr*, bound up with the unshifting soil, remains to some extent a fact to this day.

On the withdrawal of the Romans, Wales broke up into a number of petty kingdoms, each at war with all the rest. Of these the four greater were Gwynedd, Powys, Gwent and Dyfed¹; while the two lesser kingdoms of Ceredigion (Cardigan), and Morganwg (Glamorgan), though occasionally independent, were mostly subject to one or other of their stronger neighbours. These possibly represent in some sort rival entities of the pre-Roman time, but the fact is not at present capable of proof. All came in time to recognise an overlord or *Gwledig*, whose claim to that title, as with the Saxon Bretwalda, was his momentary power; and upon occasion all might voluntarily revert to the old Celtic custom of appointing one person as the supreme authority for dealing with an emergency.² But of one organised nation under a strong hereditary sovereign there is no trace until the time of Howel Dda (tenth century), nor should we expect it. To the four greater kingdoms corresponded the four early sees of Llandaff,³ Llanelwy (St. Asaph),⁴ Bangor, and St. David's.

¹ In a very rough sense these correspond to north-west (Gwynedd), north-east (Powys), south-east (Gwent), and south-west (Dyfed) Wales. Dyfed and Gwent fought to possess Morganwg (Glamorganshire); Powys, Gwynedd, and Dyfed, to possess Ceredigion (Cardiganshire). In the twelfth century Gwent had disappeared, and Powys had extended over most of mid-Wales; Girald. Cambr. (*Description of Wales*, i, 4) names as the three royal *curiae* of Wales Pengwern for Powys, Aberffraw for North Wales, and Dynefor for South Wales.

² cf. Girald. Cambr. *Description of Wales*, i, 2. The *Triads* (17 and 34) confirm this, asserting that Caswallon son of Lludd, Caradoc son of Bran, and Owain son of Maxen Wledig, were the 'three conventional monarchs' of the island of Britain. 'They

were called the "three conventional monarchs" because they were so privileged in a convention of the country and neighbouring country, within all the limits of the nation of the Cymry, and a convention was held in every dominion and commot and hundred of the Island of Britain and its adjacent islands' (*Tr.* 34). *Triad* 17 calls them the 'three jury monarchs,' because their powers came to them 'through the juratory election of the country and nation, when they were not elders.'

³ All Welsh tradition declares that Llandaff was the site of the first 'church of God' in Wales.

⁴ Writing in the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis still speaks of it as 'the poor little cathedral of Llan-Elwy or St. Asaph . . .

Every one of these kingdoms must have had its own royal centre, its recognised places of assembly, and its own royal cemeteries, but there are reasons enough why we cannot to-day recover them.¹ The suspension of kings and kingdoms during nearly four hundred years of Roman rule would inevitably break most of the threads of continuity; the gradual spread of Christianity, and thereafter the masterful intrusion of Cunedda with his Brythonic Christian followers, would make impossible the resuscitation of the old order. It had been otherwise in Ireland, where the Roman had never interfered, and Christianity, which found the old order in full activity, merely adopted it so far as might be. The Irish never had excuse to forget the ways or the graves of their forefathers.

In the *Mabinogion* we read frequently of the 'gorsedd in Arberth.' This place, now Narberth, was a royal seat of the kings of Dyfed. Close thereby, in the extreme west of Carmarthenshire, in the parishes of Llanglydwen, Llandyssilio East, and Cilymaenllwyd—the burial-place at the Hoar Stone—is a notable group of monuments, menhirs, dolmens, cairns, barrows, and circles,² which may represent a royal cemetery of that kingdom. The presence close by of the ancient monastic house of Whitland (Ty-Gwyn), reputed the foundation of Paul Hên in the fifth century,³ to some extent confirms this suggestion. In south Glamorganshire again Welsh tradition locates at Llanilltyd (Llantwit Major) one of the 'Three Perpetual Choirs' of Britain, and the only one of the three which belongs to Wales; and the presence of a multitude of antiquities—dolmens and barrows and earthworks of all kinds—bears out the implied importance of the place, as also do the indisputable facts that in this part of Wales were set both the still more famous monastery of St. Illtyd at Llancarfan, and the chief of Welsh cathedrals at Llandaff. We owe to the remoteness of these coastal areas of South

to which Powys is subject' (*Description of Wales*, i, 4). Architecture, never a strong point with the Celt, has made even less mark in Wales than it did in Ireland (see above, ch. xviii). The founder of Llanellwyr was Kentigern (sixth century).

¹ Amongst such may have been the cemeteries at Cors y Gedol (circles, cairns, cromlechs and menhirs), that near Harlech,

that of Cop'a'r leni near Prestatyn, and the Beddau Gwyr Ardudwy. Cynddelw is said to call the church of Meifod a 'cemetery of princes.'

² *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, ad. loc.

³ This is the usual view. Some modern authorities try to prove that it was at St. David's.

Wales, and to the consequent persistence of a large Goidelic element, the fact that it is still possible to recognise these indications of an older order of things. In central and northern Wales the population has suffered greater changes, and change of population means the destruction of that local folk-memory which in archaeology is frequently the major part of the evidence.

The 'gorsedd in Arberth' is described as a lofty mound, and there is abundant evidence that amongst the Welsh it was the custom to hold meetings, judicial meetings in particular, at such mounds. Probably every *cantref* and every *cymmod*, if not also every *tref* and every *maenwr*, had its own such mound.¹ The word *gorsedd* came indeed in the *Laws* to signify a court of law,² and it was customary, in cases of disputes about land, to meet on the land which was the subject of the law-suit,³ a special mound being thrown up on the spot for the purpose. In place-names the word seems usually to denote a mound, whether natural or artificial, 'possibly because it was a royal habit to hold sessions on elevations of the kind.'⁴ It was always circular; it was in fact a *cruc*, and to this day all over Wales any circular mound may be so called. In old Welsh the word *breyr* signified one who owned free land, 'a baron, he that presided in the court of a barony (which was held in the open air) on an eminence or *bre*⁵; in fact *breyr* meant a mount-man, that is, a man of the court, because the court was held on a hill or rising ground.'⁶

The original British Church was extremely poor. There would be no change for the better upon the departure of the Romans, but rather the contrary, for in the breakdown of civil authority the Church stood to lose what little

¹ *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, no. 745, mentions for example a mound in the parish of Talley, known as Twrla, 'the mound of laws,' with the remark that the name 'points to the structure as a seat of commote jurisdiction.' At its base is a very large menhir. Local tradition declares that Llywarch Hên (vi cent.) used to hold his court on the mound called Castell Llywarch near the church of Llanfor (Llanfawr), Bala. Beside this mound stood the stone circle called Pabell (*Arch. Cambr.* 1919, p. 568).

² See for example *Laws*, Cod. Ven. ii, ii, 51; Cod. Dim. ii, viii, 15, etc.

³ Lloyd, *Hist. of Wales*, i, 302.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Owen Pughe, *Welsh-Eng. Dict.* (1891).

⁶ Hubert Lewis, *Ancient Laws of Wales* (1889). *Breyr* is therefore, in formation (*bre-gwyr*) as in meaning, precisely analogous to the Saxon terms *ciric-man* and *gemot-man*. See further Gomme, *Primitive Folk-moots*, pp. 98-102.

property it had. When therefore the great Cunedda,¹ himself possibly half a Roman and certainly a Brython, became Gwledig, with an authority reaching from the Clyde to the Severn Sea, and openly took Christianity under his protection, it was a stroke of high policy which won for him the firm adhesion of all the Christians of Wales. Cunedda is mentioned in the *Triads*² as 'the first in the island of Britain that gave lands and privileges to God and his saints,' and he ranks with Brychan and Caw as one of the three chief of those who founded families of 'saints.' In ancient Ireland all or any Christian was termed a saint, and much the same would seem to have been the case in Wales; so that when we are told, for example, that Brychan was the father of some fifty saints, it means merely that he succeeded in setting up in the world this number of sons and daughters, all professed Christians. As it is usually expressed, this entailed the formation of so many new 'religious' tribes side by side with those pre-existing, each with its own local centre and its own *regulus*. This is only another way of saying that it meant the creation of so many new communities, each with its own oecist. The matter presented no difficulty amongst a people who for the most part still lived a tribal life in a land where there was indefinite room for it.³ Christianity in fact availed itself of this feature of Welsh society to effect a peaceful penetration, and under the veil of a legal fiction gradually to substitute the village community for the tribe.⁴

The new settlement was in Wales called a *llan*, and the founder of it was just as much a *regulus* as was the head of any other tribe; but being also a Christian he was therefore a 'saint,' and the *llan* and its belongings were looked

¹ He is said to have flourished about 330-370, but this is possibly half a century too early. Tradition says he was a North Briton, so that he may have learnt his Christianity in Strathclyde among the Southern Picts, and from the same source as did Patrick. The Picts, as has been seen above, were Brythons.

² *Triad*, xviii.

³ cf. *Vita S. Gundleii* (in Rees, *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*, Llandoverly, 1853; hereafter referred to as *C.B.S.*), ch. 4, of the angelic vision which revealed

to the saint the destined site for his *llan*: 'The land which thou shalt possess, though now not cultivated, shall be tilled by oxen and shall be called thy domain.'

⁴ Seebohm, *Village Community*, pp. 205, 225; Girald. *Cambr. Description of Wales*, i, 7, 8, etc. Peculiar emphasis is laid, in their several *Lives*, upon the activities of the Welsh saints as agriculturists. They act upon the precept *Laborare est orare*. In the north of Scotland it is a local saying that all the best land is to be found where St. Columba and his disciples made their settlements.

upon as belonging to 'God and his saints' in the same way as other tribes belonged to whatever pagan divinity they most affected. Each settlement was the *llan* of its founder, and in hundreds of cases the modern village still preserves his name. There are more than 500 *llan*-names of parishes in Wales to-day, and while some of these have been fathered upon other eponyms—Our Lady, or St. Michael, or some other canonical saint—far the greater number still commemorate those very worldly 'saints' who first founded them, carving for themselves out of the wilderness new holdings and new homesteads. Here and there were to be found other *llans* owing their origin to some hermit or other devotee who here sought a retreat from the world, one whose life and purpose more closely corresponded to saintliness as we understand it. Of such were SS. Cadoc and Illtyd, Beuno and Teilo and Dewi Sant (St. David). But as a general rule the Welsh 'saint' was no saint at all, and only very superficially a Christian.

The word *llan*, 'a clearing, level space,'¹ originally contained no suggestion of any church, or indeed of any building whatever. It denoted merely the area within which the founder had decided to make his home, and it would be demarcated by the customary means of fosse and vallum, and consecrated by a burial.² There is no doubt at all that the *llan* was originally always circular. To this day the occasional squatters upon the unenclosed hill-sides

¹ The derivation is said to be from Lat. *planum*, like Span. *llano*, 'a level field'; cf. *llawn* from *plenus*. In the Latin *Lives of the Saints*, *planus*, *complanatus*, *planities*, are repeatedly used of such religious settlements; e.g. when St. Cadoc has selected his site at *Nantcarfan*, his first care is *in planum redigere* (*Vita S. Cadoci*, 5). The older form *plan* is preserved in such Breton names as *Plancoet* (= *Llangoed*), 'clearing in the wood,' and in the Cornish name for the 'rounds,' *plane an gwariou*. There is a village of Planguary near Redruth. The town of Carmichael, Lanarkshire, was *Planmichael* in the twelfth century (*Mackinlay*, p. 62). Commonly it appears in Cornish and Breton as *Lan-* (prefix). In Scotland generally it is rare, and in Ireland it is rarer still. It occurs as a prefix once only in Manx (A. W. Moore, *Surnames and Place-names of I. of Man*, p. 155).

² The term 'was applied originally to a

burial-ground, and subsequently came to be used of the building erected on that site' (*Dafen Jones, Early Cymry and their Church*, p. 100). It does not appear ever to have denoted a building save by implication only, just as the word 'farm' connotes a farm-house. That it meant a burial-ground before it implied any structural church is archaeologically true, but whether it was ever used of a burial-ground before Christianity is unknown. In his account of St. Cadoc's making his first *llan* at *Nantcarfan* (*Vita S. Cadoci*, 5) the scribe remarks that the Saint was fulfilling the mandate, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'; and it is quite possible that the tendency to restrict the word to Christian settlements only arose from the scriptural text and had direct reference thereto. The Latin *planum* was sometimes used in the sense of 'cemetery'; see *Ducange*.

of Wales frequently surround their clearing with a circular fence¹; and in Wales, as in Ireland, this was the immemorial fashion of a homestead. It was also the immemorial and invariable fashion of a barrow, and, as has been remarked, the *llan* was a burial-ground before it was a settlement. The Cornish Polwhele a century ago wrote: 'We use *lhan* (*sic*) for a church probably because the Druids before Christianity sacrificed and buried their dead in a circle or enclosure of stones.'² The logic is confused, but the passage proves that to its author's mind a *llan* was, even in Cornwall, of necessity circular.

Within its *clawdd*—fosse and vallum—gathered the saint and his disciples, and there they built the huts which were also originally their several oratories. The spot was naturally known as the *llan* of the founder, whoever he might be. In course of time it might come to possess a church, and the church might become the important feature of the settlement, which itself might develop into a village and ultimately into a parish. The fact that so many *llans* are modern villages with churches has given rise to the popular belief that *llan* itself means 'church.' It does not. The Welsh word for a church is *eglwys* (*ecclesia*), and there is no other.³ In its original sense *llan* is still the suffix in many words in common use,⁴ as occasionally also in place-names; and there are numberless *llan*-names in Wales where no church is to be found and for that matter no village.⁵

¹ The same thing may be seen as far east as the slopes of the Clee hills, Shropshire (1917).

² *Hist. Cornwall* (1816), i, 133.

³ 'The fact is that the church was only a portion of the *llan* or monastery; the other buildings have long since disappeared, but the church still remains and retains the old appellation of the entire establishment'; Lingard, *Hist. A.-S. Church* (1845), ii, 382. In the language of South Wales the question is 'Are you going to the *llan*?' In the speech of North Wales it is 'Are you going to the *eglwys*?' In Wales, as in Ireland the Saxon word 'church' is intrusive, and is found mostly in the south, where foreign influence has been strongest; e.g. Newchurch (a church and parish 3 miles north of Carmarthen, whereof the name belies its very great antiquity), and Frowlincherche (i.e. Frauleinkerke, 'Church of the Virgin,'

an obviously Flemish name), parish of Llawhaden, Pemb.

In the parish of Carew, 5 m. ENE. from Pembroke, occurs the name of Crickchurch, which is a modern error for Critchurch (i.e. Christchurch), as appears from the churchwardens' account of the seventeenth century. There was a burial-place thereby (information of Rev. W. G. Spurrell).

⁴ *Corlan*, 'sheep-fold'; *ydlan*, 'corn-yard'; *corfflan*, 'graveyard'; Rhuddlan. Not seldom a modern *llan* is due to confusion with an original *glan*, 'bank (of a river)', e.g. Llandaff ('Taff-bank'), Llangammarch, Llanelwy, etc., or to confusion with *nant*, 'a valley' (e.g. Llancarfan and Lanteglos), or *llwyn* 'a grove.'

⁵ e.g. Llanmilo in Pendine, Carm. Milo was a Norman warrior, and *llan* here means simply 'settlement,' 'place of

Many of these were doubtless monastic settlements which died out. Those which did not die out might owe that good fortune to a variety of causes, and in some cases it was due to the real saintliness of the founder. He became a force in his own day, gathered about him a school of disciples, and dying left his body to be buried within his *llan*, to be a source of strength and revenue to the whole settlement. Some of these grew up to be the Welsh equivalents of the great English monasteries of pre-Reformation times, owning vast property and revenues.

These Welsh monastic foundations would be in every respect like those of Ireland, but possibly smaller and poorer. In Ireland Christianity stepped straight into the heritage vacated by Druidism, whereas in Wales such heritage had been unclaimed and uncared for ever since Rome had broken Druidism; and Christianity suffered accordingly. This is one reason why Wales has no Inismurray, no Clonmacnois. Another reason is that Celtic Christianity in Wales earlier underwent alteration from intrusive Latinism than was the case in Ireland. But had neither of these reasons been active, Wales would still have been second of the two, because of the smallness and poverty of the country. Llantwit and Bangor Iscoed¹ excepted, it is not pretended that any early Welsh monastery rivalled those of Ireland. Nevertheless Christianity did the same work in the one country as in the other, and there is no question that the *llans* were the force which weaned the Welsh from their pastoral and tribal² life, and brought them unwillingly to dwell in villages. The *Lives* make much of the part played by the founders in encouraging agriculture. It was they who turned the people from the nomad life of shepherds and hunters and bandits to that of settled agricultural communities. The Welsh saints themselves looked always to Ireland for help material, intellectual and spiritual. It was not solely because Goidel naturally

residence,' with no implication either of a church or of saintship. The modern Llanmilo is merely a large country house. The older L'anmilo is a homestead a mile away inland; and in the valley leading from the one to the other stands the dismantled castle of Milo (known as Castle Lloyd, and

commonly mistaken for a British fort), which gives its name to the farm.

¹ Destroyed by Aethelfrith of Northumbria in the year 607, it never recovered. Bede (*H.E.* ii, 2, §94) endorses the story that it had mustered 2,100 inmates.

² Girald. Cambr. *Description of Wales*, i, 17.

sought unto Goidel: on the other side Saxon paganism largely cut off Wales from the world beyond.

The early contact of Wales with Ireland, though difficult to determine with exactitude, is none the less a certainty. Welsh tradition is full of it from north to south, but the visible evidence is to be found chiefly in Dyfed, exactly where one would look for it; for the coasts and rivers of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire offer excellent harbourage for ships, whereas little of the kind is to be found on other parts of the Welsh coast. In the Roman era the havens were probably even more numerous, for the now harbourless coast between Pendine and Laugharne seems to have had its own. To Dyfed tradition brings the Deisi,¹ an Irish tribe expelled (third century) by Cormac MacAirt from Meath, from whom was descended a long line of kings of Dyfed, amongst them Vortipor, himself in turn ancestor of Elen, the wife of Howel the Good (tenth century). Here tradition locates the Gwyddelod Ffichti, 'painted Picts,' i.e. Scoti, who long resisted the southward extension of Cunedda's power²; here are to be found the greater number of the ogam-stones of Wales; here are situated the greater number of those Welsh place-names compounded with *cil* (Irish *kil*)³; and here, perhaps alone in Great Britain, is a way-side altar with a pillar-stone bearing the wheeled cross, and the round pebbles—a complete replica of an Irish cursing-altar.⁴ Even some of the churches of the district

¹ Their name survives in that of the barony of Decies, co. Waterford. Vyrnwy Morgan (*Philosophy of Welsh History*, p. xx) quotes the assertion that even in Queen Elizabeth's time some parts of the country were so overrun by Irish that only the clergy of the parishes were Welsh. Otherwise the district was markedly the home of ancient survivals, not merely from the Goidelic, but from the Iberian time.

² Nennius (*Hist. Brit.* § 14) distinctly says that the Irish held Gower and the adjoining mainland of S. Wales until expelled by Cunedda and his sons. In the *Life of S. Carannog* (*C.B.S.* p. 97), who was grandson of Cunedda and contemporary with St. David, we are told that 'the Scoti were masters of Wales (*Britanniam*) for 30 years,' and that they dethroned his father Ceredig, the eponym of Cardigan (*ibid.* p. 101). One of St. David's chief opponents is said to have been one Boya, who is called a

Scot, a governor and a magician, i.e. he was an Irish Druid (*C.B.S.* p. 124). See also Stokes, *Ireland and the Celt. Ch.* p. 16.

³ e.g. Kilgetty (Pemb.), Kilgerran (Card.), Cilrhedyn and Cilycwm and Cilymaenllwyd (Carm.). The Irish name of St. David's settlement in Menevia is Cell Muine or Cell Muny (*Latine, Civitas Kelmunensis*) and from Rhygyfarch onward all who mention it lay emphasis upon the peculiar holiness of its cemetery. It was 'a place whence few shall go to hell, for every one who shall have been buried in the cemetery of that place in sound faith shall obtain mercy' (*Rhygyfarch's Life of St. David*, 14). In Wales, as elsewhere, *cil* meaning 'burial-place' is almost invariably a prefix. The suffix seen in Llanycil near Bala (Merion.) is another word meaning 'wood.'

⁴ It is known as the 'Holy Stones' (Ceryg Sanctaidd). For a description of it, see *Arch. Camb.* 6 ser. vii (1907), p. 267.

have vaults formed of untooled voussoirs spalled with smaller stones and rudely grouted with cement¹, exactly reproducing similar Irish work, of the fourteenth century. The *Lives of the Saints* abound in allusions to the intercourse between the two countries. St. Cadoc's teacher is one Tathan (or Meuthi), *religiosus Hibernensis*, a *presbyter* living a hermit's life with twelve *ministri* at Caerwent.² St. Cadoc himself spends three years in Ireland *discendi gratia*, to complete his training, and returns 'with a numerous train of Irish and Welsh clergy,'³ one of them his famous disciple Finian Macmoil; and he employed as his architect an Irishman named Liugwri, whose ability led to his being murdered by his envious Welsh fellows.⁴ The saint habitually wore a gown of Irish frieze.⁵ It has been suggested that the Christianity of Ireland was itself borrowed from Wales,⁶ for which there is little evidence or likelihood. So far as can be gathered Wales always looked to Ireland as her spiritual teacher, and the Welsh saints shewed scarcely anything of that passion for mission-work abroad which characterised the Irish. In Wales, as Willis Bund has remarked, the key-note of religion is not catholicity, but individualism.

The churchyard of the parish of Eglwys Cymmin⁷ in Carmarthenshire has probably enjoyed an unbroken continuity as a Christian *locus consecratus* from the fifth century to the present time. It has enjoyed also an entire

¹ For example Penally, near Tenby, and Eglwys Cymmin. Bishop Gower of St. David's used precisely the same vaulting in some of his secular building in Pembrokeshire in the fourteenth century. These vaults are formed without springs, the walls gradually converging to the roof-line.

² *Vita S. Cadoci*, i; *Vita S. Tatheii*. The site of St. Tathan's monastery, readily identified from the *Vita*, was 50 yds. outside the east gate of Roman Caerwent, and a stone sarcophagus, found upon the spot in 1910 and believed to contain his remains, has been translated to the parish church of Caerwent. See J. G. Wood, *Saint Tathan* (Newport, 1912).

³ *Vita S. Cadoci*, 7, 8.

⁴ *ibid.* 17.

⁵ *ibid.* 14.

⁶ It was doubtless reinforced by British Christians flying before the advancing Saxons, and they would naturally for the

most part cross from the west (i.e. Welsh) coast.

⁷ It bears a fourteenth-century dedication in honour of St. Margaret Marlos, due to the patronage of her uncle, the great Sir Guy de Brien, whose beautiful canopied tomb is in Tewkesbury abbey church. She had married Sir Robert Marlos, who held land in the parish. The same dedication is found at Llandawke (2 miles east) and at Pendine (2 miles south), and nowhere else. Guy de Brien himself was lord marcher of Laugharne, and lord of the manor of Eglwys Cymmin. He claimed descent from St. Margaret of Scotland, and died *circa* 1393. The church stands upon the line of a very ancient road which comes from the direction of Laugharne westward by Tafarn Diflas and the Ceryg Sanctaidd to Eglwys Cymmin, and so on to the farm of West Pwll, heading direct for the ancient Gorsedd yn Arberth (Narberth).

immunity from alteration. Here, if anywhere, one should be able to discern some of the original features of the earliest Welsh Christianity, and by good fortune there

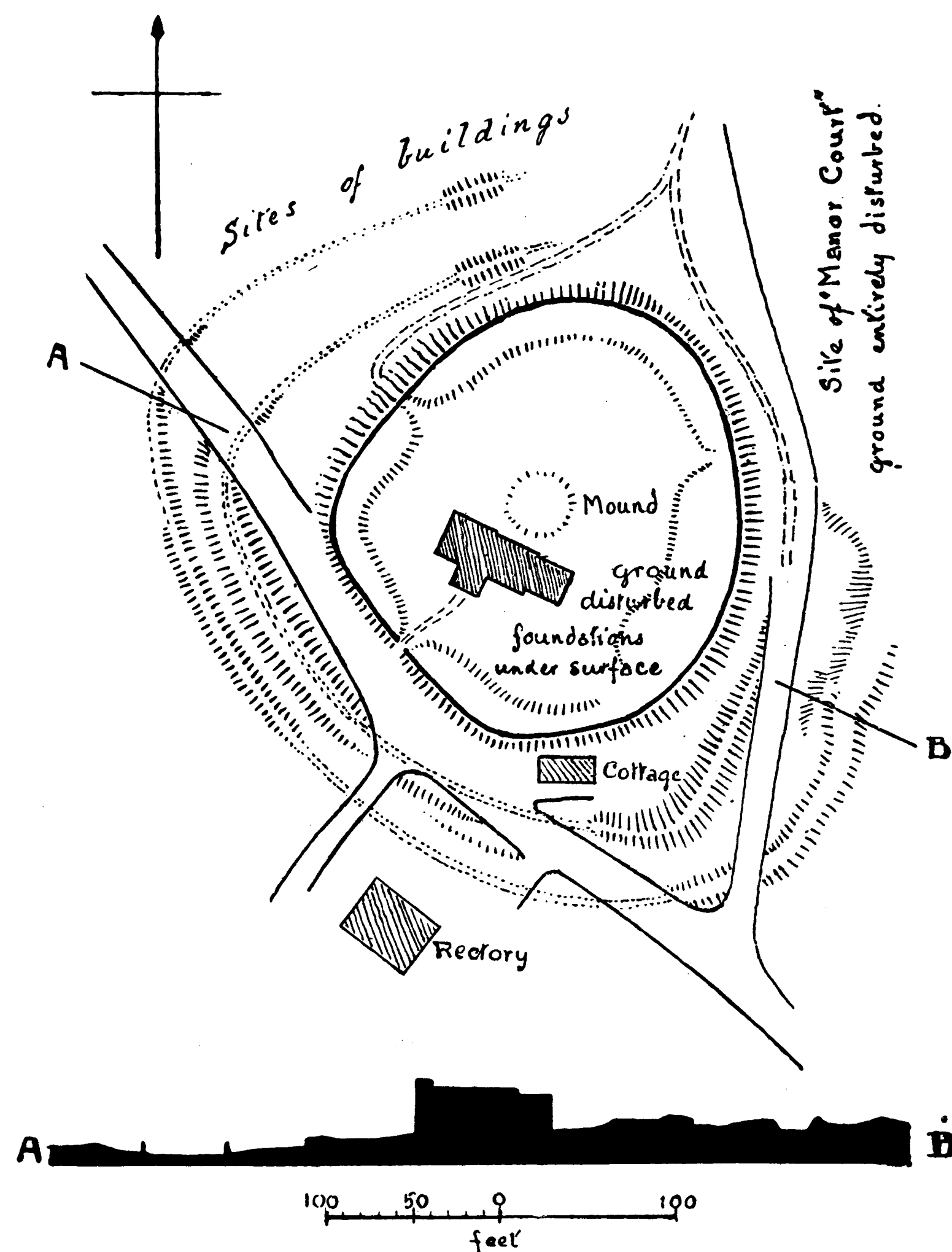


FIG. 4. CHURCHYARD OF EGLWYS CYMMIN, CARMARTHENSHIRE.

survive a great number of these features. Of the building itself nothing need be said here, save that the central portion of the church, measuring 23 ft. by 15 ft. only, may very well reproduce the form of the earlier wooden

oratory, and that, as the plan shows, it occupies an eccentric position near the south side¹ of a circular churchyard having an average diameter of 70 yds. and an area of just one statute acre (English). The orientation of the church is 24° south of true east.² The churchyard is surrounded by the greatly-spread remains of an earthen vallum, of which the exterior face has been perpendicularly revetted with stone. Outside this was a deep and wide fosse, and beyond this again a second and a third vallum. These outer defences are in some part intact along the south-west segment of the circle, and to a less degree on the south-east. Along the remainder of the periphery they have been destroyed, but there are indications to prove that they once existed.

The earthwork then was an exact reproduction of the triple work known in Ireland generically as a *rath*,³ specifically as a *dun*, and by the Brehon Laws described as the proper residence of a king. Now Cynin, the person who has left his name to the parish, was a *regulus* of the fifth century, a grandson⁴ of Brychan; and Brychan, as has

¹ This would seem to have been the usual position, obviously to avoid interfering with the *mynwent* (p. 105). It was so in the case of St. Cuthbert's *mansio* in Farne, and at Barking; and it is so at South Malling in Sussex (ch. xxv).

² The point of sunrise on the Patronal Day (10th June) is 23° north of east. It is a demonstrable fact that numbers of the most ancient churches in Great Britain, as in other countries, and particularly in Italy, are built with but small reference to the east and west position. If, as is usually held, their dedications are for the most part of late origin (*circa* eleventh century), whereas the churches themselves are of much earlier date, it is clear that the original structures cannot have been purposely orientated to the points of sunrise on the several patronal days. Perhaps, when the later dedication was decided upon, that saint was occasionally chosen with whose sunrise-point the existing fabric most nearly coincided.

³ 'A great number of the churches in S. Wales are situated in close proximity to pagan *raths*. This is especially the case in Pembrokeshire' (Romilly Allen, *Mon. Hist. Brit. Church*, p. 49). It is not clear on what ground the said *raths* are called pagan, and it is more than possible that many of them are early Christian works (*llans*), and some even of Norman construction.

Lewis (*Topog. Dict.* 1843) mentions that circular enclosures near Steynton (Stainton) in Pemb. were called *rhâtbs*; and Spurrell (*Welsh Dict.*) gives *rhath* 'a cleared spot, plain,' which is very much the meaning of *llan*. The word was undoubtedly borrowed from the Irish immigrants (not necessarily at any early date), and the Welsh seem to have used it as carelessly as do the Irish: thus a large mound between Haverfordwest and Poyston is called 'The Rath.' The O.M. marks a number of *raths* on or near the north-western coast of the county, and there are traces of others in the parish of Llanpyddid in Brecknockshire (*Arch. Camb.* 7 ser. iv, p. 208). It is not found in N. Wales. Up and down the country is found the word *garthen* applied to similar circular enclosures; e.g. the Garthen in Llangynyw (Mont.) which is described as of exactly the same area and construction as the *rath* at Eglwys Cymmin and another in Llanerfyl (Mont.) where the vallum is single only, but the area is again the same. This must be the Teutonic *garth*, which in the Welsh form *gardd* is in common use for 'garden.' Welsh uses also *garth*, 'fold, enclosure.'

⁴ His father is said to have been St. Tudwal, very possibly the Totaval read upon a stone lately found (1920) near the church of the neighbouring parish of Llanwadwrn (*Arch. Camb.* 6 ser. xx, p. 190).

been said, was probably in part at least Irish, tradition declaring that his mother was an Irish princess. Professor Rhys indeed thought the name of Cynin to be Irish.¹ Cynin was also an abbat, a bishop, and the father of a daughter named Avitoria, whose ogam-stone, inscribed with a bi-lingual legend,² is one of the chief treasures of the church, where it was found in 1880. A mile or so to the north is a site still known as Parc yr Eglwys, where tradition declares there stood an earlier church.³

There seems to be little difficulty or risk in reconstructing history from these evidences. The earthwork was a secular residence of Cynin, possibly at one time his principal residence; and Cynin was a Christian like his father, and a man of education in his day.⁴ His place of worship was the spot now called Parc yr Eglwys. On the death of his daughter, probably within this very *dun*, he decided to consecrate the spot to God, and to make the interment of Avitoria its consecration-burial. As the precinct was already circular, of suitable area, and provided with its own wall and fosse, nothing was needed but to consecrate it. So there she was buried, and in all likelihood her grave was in the centre of the precinct,⁵ surrounded by a number of pillar-stones, on one of which her father 'wrote her name'; and either then or later was built an oratory. Cynin himself removed elsewhere, either to Llangynnin, or to Trawsmawr, four miles north-west of Carmarthen. His own gravestone with its Latin legend was found in the churchyard of Llanfihangel Croesfeini, 'St. Michael Stone-crosses,'⁶ in the parish of Newchurch and three miles from Carmarthen.

The first and natural consequence of these proceedings

¹ *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, p. 40.

² The legend runs AVITORIA FILIA CUNIGNI—AVITORIGES INIGENA CUNIGNI. Upon his own sepulchral stone at Llanfihangel Croesfeini his name reads CUNEGNI. There seems to be no sufficient reason to doubt that Cunignus, Cunegnus, Cynning, Cynin, and Cymmin are one and the same. There is a Llangynnin 10 m. sw. of Carmarthen, and a Caer Gynnin at Tafarn Spite.

³ For further particulars see Treherne, *Eglwys Cymmin* (Spurrell, Carmarthen, 1918), and a paper by the same in *Arch. Cambr.* July, 1907.

⁴ So the *Triads*: 'Brychan gave to his children and grandchildren a liberal education, that they might teach the Christian faith to such of the Cymru as were unbelievers.' Brychan was contemporary with Cunedda.

⁵ There is a considerable mound in the centre of the churchyard, though of slight elevation. Beneath this, at a depth of 6 ft., were found (1919) some six skeletons laid side by side with heads to the east, and also part of the skeleton of a lamb. Sir Arthur Keith pronounces the human bones to shew no features inconsistent with a date of the fifth or sixth century.

⁶ Now destroyed.

was that the older burial-ground at Parc yr Eglwys was superseded and presently abandoned. The oratory by Avitoria's grave, originally the normal oblong hut of wattle or timber, came through many reparations and alterations to be the parish church; and presently, re-built in stone, assumed at last the present plan,¹ nearly a thousand years after Avitoria's death. By that time at any rate Avitoria's grave was wholly forgotten, and her monument probably fallen; and a new patron, Sir Guy de Brien, casting about for a new dedication, decided in favour of his saintly niece, whose nunnery was distant but three miles to the east at Llandawke.²

The churchyard of Eglwys Wrw,³ in north Pembroke-shire, resembles that of Eglwys Cymmin, though, with the exception of the inner vallum, the traces of any earthworks which once surrounded it are difficult to recognise. The present church, which is dedicated to St. Cristiolus,⁴ was built in the sixteenth century, but the earlier building stood until queen Elizabeth's time on the north side of the new church and in the centre of the graveyard.

It is recorded⁵ that Maelgwn Gwynedd, prince of Powys, surrendered to St. Cybi a royal residence (*caer*), within which the saint at once proceeded to build a church. The date would be the first half of the sixth century.

The two *Lives* of St. Findian, the one Irish,⁶ the other Latin, relate how the king of the district gave to God and the saint 'the fortress wherein kings were wont to dwell,' on the bank of a mere which Findian miraculously caused to become dry.

There is therefore documentary evidence for the transfer of secular sites to the Church, and their consecration as 'churches'; and the archaeological evidence bears out the other.

We are further told⁷ that St. Gwynlliw built a church

¹ This dates only from the end of the fourteenth century, when Guy de Brien added the chancel. There had apparently been an earlier extension westward.

² Llandawke is unexplained, but the name Castell Toch in the same parish may embody the same name.

³ Referred by Baring Gould and Fisher (*Celtic Saints*, iii, 215) to a dubious St. Gwrw.

⁴ A saint of the latter part of the fifth

century, a nephew of St. Germanus and son of Emyr Llydaw (Llydaw the Armorican).

⁵ *C.B.S.* pp. 187, 501.

⁶ Translated by Whitley Stokes in *Book of Lismore*. St. Findian (of Clonard) is yet another instance of an Irishman's coming to do mission-work in Wales.

⁷ *C.B.S.* p. 449, note. Gwynlliw Filw (St. Gundleus) married a grand-daughter of Brychan and became the father of St. Cadoc.

beside his *caer* (at Newport, Mon.), to which the position of Parc yr Eglwys, a mile or so from Cynin's *dun* at Eglwys Cymmin would seem to provide a parallel.

Such as it is, the evidence of archaeology supports the view that the Welsh monastic settlement was imitated from that of Ireland; from which it would seem to follow that the earlier Christianity of the Roman-Britons was not monastic. Cynin himself was possibly half Irish, and he dwelt in a *dun* constructed according to Irish requirements. Earthworks of this type, small, symmetrical, compact, well built and triple-walled, and placed on relatively low ground, are not common in Wales, where the prevailing types are those of the hill-forts, of little regularity, rough workmanship, and no particular scheme of defence.

The facts further suggest that in Wales the *eglwys* was older than the *llan*, and so it unquestionably was in its original sense of a *place* of Christian meeting. The word did not acquire the sense of a *building* till some centuries afterwards.

Like the early Irish saints, those of Wales made a practice of withdrawing from the world sooner or later, and seeking places of retirement in the wilderness. The Irish *disert* reappears in Wales as *diserth*, and there are to this day three parishes in the Principality deriving their names therefrom; so many indubitable instances, that is, of the hermit's oratory growing up to be a parish church.

What was the manner of procedure in founding a *llan* upon a site as yet unoccupied, we are told, more or less directly, in several of the *Lives* of the Welsh saints.

St. Cadoc,¹ desirous of withdrawing from active missionary life, casts about for a suitable abode in the wilderness. He finds it in a wild valley ringed on all sides by hills, and miraculous assistance provides for him a 'level clearing' (*planum*, i.e. *llan*) amongst the rocks and brushwood. He is advised in an angelic vision how he shall determine the precise spots for his *templum*, *dormitorium*, and *refectorium*, to be dedicated in the name of the Holy Trinity. On the spot first indicated he erects

¹ He was a grandson of Brychan, and is said to have received part of his education in Ireland.

monasteriolum insigne, lignorum materie, 'a fine little cell of timber.' The next step is *vastum acervum de terra erigere*, 'to raise a great mound of earth,' and *in eodem pulcherrimum cimiterium facere*, 'to lay out an exceeding fair graveyard therein,' to the end that 'the bodies of the faithful dead might be thither brought and there buried round the periphery (*circa ambitum*)¹ of the *templum*.' Leading to this he makes four wide paths 'down the four hill-slopes surrounding his cell (*cellam*).' Finally when all this is done, he 'caused to be thrown up in another spot a circular earthwork on the plan of a town (*tumulum in modum urbis rotundum*² *de limo terrae exaggerari*), and so to be reared (*in tumulum erigi*) what the Britons in their speech style Castell Cadoc.' The traditional scene of the settlement is Llancafarn³ (Glam.), six miles east of Llantwit Major, subsequently the site of St. Illytd's vastly greater monastic settlement.

The writer of this *Life* is thought to have been of the twelfth century,⁴ that is, of a time when the Normans were firmly planted in many parts of Wales, and along all its marches, and when the Roman type of monasticism was universally established in England. It must be assumed that he had before him manuscripts, whether Latin or Welsh or possibly Irish, of a far earlier date; but that he tampered with his originals after the fashion of his kind is clearly proved by two facts: firstly, he conceives a monastery to be necessarily made up of a church, a dorter, and a refectory; and secondly, he attributes to Cadoc the building of a Norman castle.

The Welsh monasteries of Cadoc's time, if they

¹ *Vita S. Cadoci*, 5 and 6. S. O. Addy (*Church and Manor*, p. 124) would emend to *circa aditum templi*, but *ambitum* is the reading of the MS. (*Cotton MSS. Vespasian A xiv*). *Templum* possibly translates *llan* of the Welsh original. At any rate it means 'precinct'—a correct Latin usage—as it unquestionably does again in *Vita S. Tathebi*, where it is pointedly distinguished from the 'church' (*oratorium*) within the precinct (*fundavit templum, in quo constituit duodecim canonicos . . . singulis horis constitutis visitantes oratorium*).

² *Rotundum* for *circularum*, as in the account of St. Patrick's *fert* at Clebach (ch. xvii) and *passim*.

³ Originally Nant Carfan, as C.B.S. declares. If *Llan* were original, the form of the name should be Llangarfan. The legend that St. Germanus founded a 'choir of saints' at Llancafarn (a transparent attempt to claim for Rome the Christianisation of Wales) seems to have juggled with Welsh phonetics to support its case: *Carfan* (*Garfan*) has been treated as a compound word (it is really the name of the stream) representing an original Carman (*Garman*), and this has been purposely confused with Garmon (*Germanus*). See Willis Bund, *Celtic Church of Wales*, p. 110, and the references there cited.

⁴ C.B.S. p. 320, note.

resembled their Irish models, were innocent of any such specialisations as dorters, nor had they any 'church' as we understand that term. In Ireland the only essentials were the cemetery, the circular *limes*, and the *clochauns* which served at once as dwellings and as oratories; and to suggest that Wales was in advance of Ireland at that date in such matters is contrary to all tradition and all evidence. The scribe apparently found in the manuscript before him some typical monkish story of an angelic vision, and how the saint was guided by a wild boar¹ to the spot where he should build his 'monastery.' This brief account did not satisfy the taste of some 700 years later, and of a Latin monk withal. He therefore took upon himself to amplify the story with mention of such amenities as dorter and frater; but it is to be noticed that he gives of these features no detail whatever, which is in itself good evidence that there was nothing at all about them in the manuscript from which he was 'translating.'

The description of Castell Cadoc is yet more certainly an anachronism: it would stand to-day as a very fair description of any one of a score of castle-mounts of admittedly Norman construction.² It was the Norman way to build first a castle, and thereafter to provide for spiritual needs by building a church; or very commonly a castle was built close beside an existing church. There is some reason to believe that there was once just such a castle close beside the monastery at Llancarfan, and, its real origin forgotten, it would naturally become associated with the name of the saint and in the long run regarded as his work—Castell Cadoc. Whether or no this occurred, the twelfth-century scribe was evidently familiar with the normal facts of his own day, when castle and church usually stood side by side. He was troubled by the traditional account that St. Cadoc's settlement became a great teaching school, wherein was assembled a *familia* of 500 souls—clerics, soldiers, artisans, and poor—exclusive

¹ The intervention of some sort of animal in such cases is a regular part of the machinery in such tales, and in Welsh accounts the animal is frequently a wild boar, as in Irish legend it is frequently the Black Pig.

² e.g. the fine examples at Llampeter Velfry and Eglwys Wrw. There is, or was, just such another beside the church of Llanilid, some nine miles from Llancarfan, and there are numbers more scattered over the shires of Glamorgan, Carmarthen, and Pembroke.

of serfs and casual visitors.¹ As it did not appear to him possible that all these could be accommodated within the bounds of the monastery as described in the text before him, the worthy man felt bound to provide some sort of secular dwelling-place for the lay portion of this crowd, and therefore hit upon the idea of incorporating the *castell* into the tale.

The account, it will be observed, makes no mention of the specific construction of any church. The thing emphasised is the 'cemetery exceeding fair.' This is the primary consideration, the nucleus of the whole settlement; to it lead all the four paths, and to it everything else is subordinated.

Of the plan of the saint's *cimiterium* there is nothing definite said, but there is nothing whatever to suggest that it was in any way different from the normal Scotie and Welsh *locus consecratus*. Every Scotie monastic site was circular, and every Celtic burial-place was also circular. St. Cadoc's site was at once monastic and a burial-place, and for both reasons it must have been circular. Very possibly this is implied in the odd phrase *circa ambitum templi*. When we come to deal with the Welsh *mynwent*, it will transpire why the burials were to be 'round the periphery,' but not promiscuously over the whole area of the *templum*.

The only terms in the narrative which must or may imply any sort of roofed building, are *monasteriolum* and *cella*. The four roads lead over the hills about the *cella*, and the saint builds a *monasteriolum* of wood.

In strict language *monasterium* means 'a place where one person dwells alone,' not (as nowadays) a place where an unlimited number of persons lead a celibate life. *Monasteriolum*² should therefore mean 'a little place wherein to dwell alone.' It was a building, for it was made of timbers. It was at once the saint's dwelling-house and his oratory. Celtic practice required no more.

¹ *Vita S. Cadoci*, 15. In the *Triads* St. Cadoc figures as one of the 'three blessed trainers of British youth.' But when the saint made his *llan* in Nantcarfan he was still a small man on the threshold of his career.

² Bede uses it (*H.E.* iv, xiii, § 289) of the

small settlement of the Irish missionary Dicul and his five or six brethren at Bosham, Sussex. *Monasterium* was constantly used by ecclesiastical writers as convertible with Latin *ecclesia* (A.-S. *mynstre*). See Ducange, *Glossary*; Bingham, *Christian Antiqs.* viii, i, § 2.

What then did the scribe mean by saying that the four great roads were expressly laid out to lead to the *cella*? Why did he substitute *cella* for *monasteriolum*, unless the *cella* were something different? There can be very little doubt that the word intended is the Celtic *kil* (*cil*), i.e. the burial-ground. This was the all-important thing. The roads did not lead merely to the saint's little wooden oratory, in which he sought privacy from the world, but along those roads, as the narrative asserts, the dead were to be brought for burial¹—brought to the *kil*.

Naturally the saint must provide for himself a roof of some sort, and he placed it within the customary *limes*. The *limes* was circular, and the ground so enclosed was the *llan*, *corfflan*, or graveyard, which however did not become consecrated ground until one of the faithful had been buried there. This explains why the *cimiterium* comes first of all in the sequence. There does not occur in the whole detailed account any mention whatever of a 'church,' or of anything answering to a 'church.' The outstanding fact is that, before there could be anything of the sort, it was needful to have a *cimiterium*. It is this, and not a building, which is 'dedicated to the glory of God.' To put it bluntly, the first essential to a *llan* was a barrow.

Under angelic guidance Saint Cadoc presently founded another monastery 'near the mountain Bannawc, reputed the centre of Scotland. . . And upon a day, as he was digging the earth round the monastery he was to build,'² he had other miraculous experiences connected with the finding of certain giant bones. The text shows that he was digging the customary circular fosse which was to demarcate the barrow, i.e. the *llan*.

On yet another occasion, we are told, he 'built a church' (*ecclesiam*) for his disciple Macmoil, and 'wrought a vallum about it.'³

¹ On the Latinisation of *kil* by *cella*, see above, ch. xviii. This confusion cannot have arisen until Latin Christianity, or at any rate the Latin tongue, was established in Ireland, but it was inveterated before the thirteenth century. The author of the *Vita S. Cadoci* may therefore be acquitted of any deliberate intention to mistranslate; he was himself misled. Both *kil* and *ecclesia*, in Celtic lands, originally meant *coemeterium* and nothing

else, and each assumed a new meaning under Latin influence.

² C.B.S. p. 57, *Cum terram circa construendum monasterium foderat* (? *foderet*). The translator (*op. cit.* p. 350) entirely misses the point of the gerundive. The reading in *Nova Legenda Angliae* (1516) is *dum terram ad construendum monasterium foderet*.

³ C.B.S. p. 88, *munimine vallavit*. The translator has (p. 385) 'built a church to

St. Gwynlliw, building for himself a *habitaculum*, 'accordingly (*consequenter*) marked out a cemetery, and in the midst of it built a church (*templum*) of planks and wattle, which he daily visited with incessant prayer.'¹ And again, selecting a spot in a mountainous wilderness, he 'marked out a cemetery to the glory of St. Mary, and there built a church (*templum*), where he lived in prayer and fasting, with no companions but his servitors and his live-stock (*bestias*).'²

In the *Life of St. Illtyd* the procedure is so far precisely the same. The saint chooses his own *habitaculum* and Bishop Dubricius marks out for him firstly a *cimiterium* and secondly an *oratorium*.³ Finally we are told that 'when all these had been demarcated, he founded a church (*ecclesiam*), building a four-square wall of stone above the surrounding fosse.'⁴ It is at any rate clear that the *ecclesia* came last of all in the sequence. As the *oratorium* was already provided for, it is not clear why any *ecclesia* is mentioned at all, and this is the only passage in the *Lives* where oratory and church are spoken of as possibly different things. At this period of his career St. Illtyd was but a novice, and whatever may have been the requirements of his *familia* at a later date, he had as yet no need of anything beyond the ordinary. It is probable that the writer of the *Life* has again been misled here by the facts of his own age, or at least that he has attributed to St. Illtyd the erection of some church which arose in far later times upon the site in Hodnant made sacred by St. Illtyd's memory. Dr. Jos. Anderson cites as a specimen of the earliest Christian remains in Scotland

Macmoillus,' although the text goes on to state that Macmoil was there installed as prior. Rees (*ad loc.*) identifies with Mamhole, anciently Masmoil, a hamlet in the parish of Bedwellty, 5½ m. south of Tredegar (Mon.), where is a church dedicated to St. Sannan.

¹ C.B.S. p. 148.

² C.B.S. p. 150. The right of sanctuary extended to animals as well as to human beings (below, p. 108).

³ C.B.S. p. 164. St. Illtyd's name, Latinised as Illtutus, survives in that of his great monastic foundation of Llantwit Major (otherwise Côr Illtyd, Bangor Illtyd,

or Caerworgan), where were said to be gathered 2401 monks, divided into seven 'churches,' 49 'companies,' and 343 'colleges' of seven 'saints' apiece. It ranked (*Triad* 84) as one of the three 'perpetual choirs' of Britain. St. Illtyd was by birth a Breton, the teacher of Gildas, and belongs to an earlier date than St. Cadoc.

⁴ 'Fundavit ecclesiam munimine lapideo facto et quadrangulâri super ambientem fossam' (C.B.S. p. 164). The translation (*ibid.* p. 472) is again hopelessly at fault. It reads: 'he erected a church of stone materials and surrounded it with a quadrangular ditch.'

those upon the Brough of Deerness in Orkney, where eighteen rude mortarless cells are grouped within the remains of an earlier stone-revetted vallum around a lime-built church measuring internally 17 ft. 4 ins. by 10 ft. 2 ins. This 'church' is in plan precisely like the early Irish oratories, an oblong chamber with but one (east) window, and one (west) doorway. The cells and the vallum also are exactly like other such monastic remains in Ireland. The 'church,' being lime-built, is clearly a reconstruction of a later date,¹ and it is surrounded by the remains of 'a quadrangular enclosure, which has consisted of a stone wall about 3 ft. thick'; i.e. just such a *munimen lapideum et quadrangulare* as is spoken of in St. Illtyd's case.² It would seem then that a quadrangular enclosure is not in itself out of the question, but it cannot be shown that any enclosure of that plan was built in St. Illtyd's time. Conceivably the same thing happened at Hodnant and at the Brough of Deerness. A holy man chose the spot for his *desertum*, and built for himself a cell, presumably of wood and wattle. As time passed the sanctity of the spot increased,³ but the original cell fell to decay, and presently other devotees, making the spot their home, rebuilt it in more permanent fashion, albeit without greatly altering its plan. This might be centuries later—in the case of the Brough it may have been 500 years later—when men were becoming familiar with the rectangular Roman precinct. And further to protect the restored oratory they built about it a *munimen quadrangulare*.

Amongst all the diversity of detail in these various accounts of the making of a *llan*, one fact is invariable, viz. the thing is first and foremost a place of burial. Further it was apparently as invariably circular. The only interpretation of these facts is that the earliest Welsh Christians, when desiring to make a *locus consecratus*, began with a

¹ It need not be later, however, than the existing cells, some of which may themselves be reconstructions reared upon the foundations of earlier *clochauns*.

² See the plan in *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, p. 102. The enclosure measures about 55 ft. by 40 ft. The same writer mentions (p. 171) another example

on the Brough of Birsay, also in the Orkneys, where the dimensions are exactly double.

³ Dr. Anderson (*op. cit.*) emphasises the fact that, though there is no tradition of the particular saint concerned with the Brough, the sanctity of the spot was evidently very great and very abiding.

barrow; and the making of the barrow preceded the building of any oratory. In Wales therefore, as in Ireland, the structural church came last in the evolution, and before any structural church was built the only *ecclesia* (*eglwys*) of Wales was a place where one or more of the faithful were buried, i.e. a Christian barrow.

The Welsh *llan* being to all appearance a copy of the Irish monastic settlement, it cannot have been introduced into Wales much before the year 500, nor does the generality of Welsh tradition claim for it a greater antiquity. Before that date the Christian place of meeting in Wales was not *llan* but *eglwys*, not a monastic settlement but a barrow. The name of the *locus consecratus* at Eglwys Cymmin is consistent with this view, Cynin being supposed to have lived in the fifth century. So is the name of the yet earlier *locus consecratus* at Parc yr Eglwys close by. Eglwys Cymmin was not called *Llangynnin*, because it never was a *llan*. So also with Eglwys Wrw within its *rath* of Irish type. There are in Wales in all six ancient parishes where *eglwys* is thus used, and always has been used, instead of *llan*.¹ It is not needful to claim for them all an antiquity as great as the fifth century, but on the other hand there is no reason why they should be less old. Certainly Eglwys Cymmin is entitled to rank amongst the very oldest recognisable Christian *loca consecrata* in Wales, and therefore in the United Kingdom. From the sixth century onward it would seem that monasticism gripped Welsh Christianity so firmly that for some centuries almost every new *locus consecratus* was a *llan*, the greater monasteries sending out lesser ones, colonies as it were of the mother-*llan*, until the whole country was covered with them and divided amongst them into so many potential parishes, amongst which survived here and there other *loca consecrata* of non-monastic origin, whether through the special patronage of a great man—as with Cynin at Eglwys Cymmin—or because of the peculiar sanctity of the place—as was the case e.g. at Clynog.

The documentary evidence suggests that the primitive holy place of Christianity in Wales was normally enclosed within a circular *limes*, and this suggestion is borne out

¹ *Eglwys* has disappeared from a few other place-names, e.g. Gumfreston (Pemb.), which was anciently *Ecclies Gunniau*.

with overwhelming force by the evidence of the existing churchyards. Ignoring those—Eglwys Cymmin and Eglwys Wrw for example—which have been built within pre-existing *raths*, the list of Welsh churchyards which still retain the circular form would fill several pages with forbidding names. In Carmarthenshire alone there are more than a score,¹ not counting those in which there is evidence to show that, whatever their shape to-day, it was originally circular. They are to be found in every part of Wales, in the Brythonic North as freely as in the Goidelic South, and in the great majority of cases they are demonstrably ancient foundations. In Pembrokeshire is the churchyard of Mathry. In Flintshire the church of Llanarmon (yn Yale), of which the name preserves that of him who won the ‘Alleluia Victory’ in 430, has a circular *corfflan*, as have those of Cilcain and Meliden. That of Efenechtyd in Denbighshire has been mentioned before, and it is significant that the name signifies ‘the monastery.’ Elias Owen writing of the Vale of Clwyd, remarks ‘the churchyards of this district are commonly circular.’² In Carnarvonshire are those of Carnguwch and Llanaelhaiarn; in Cardiganshire Llanwnws, Llangeitho, Bangor-Teifi, and Ciliau Aeron; in Montgomeryshire Llangadfan (enlarged in 1910), Caereinion, Llanerfyl, Llanmerewig; in Merionethshire Llandecwyn, Llanddwywe-is-y-Graig, Llandrillo and Pennal; in Breconshire those of Llangynog, Devynock, and Llanddewi ’r Cwm; in Radnorshire Diserth, St. Harmon, and Llanyre; in Monmouthshire that of Bassaleg; in Glamorganshire that of Penrice in Gower. These are but isolated examples amongst many circular garths. They are in fact ubiquitous and, if relatively fewer in some parts than in others, this is to be explained by greater Norman or English interference in those parts. To build or rebuild churches was a

¹ According to Mr. E. Lauder of H.M. Board of Agriculture there are traces of circularity in 72 cases out of 82. In 21 of the 72 cases the yards are actually circular to-day, while 13 others are partially so; and these are 47 per cent. of the whole. Amongst them are Cilymaenllwyd, Cilrhedyn West, Llandilo Fawr, Llanpumpaint (Tithe map, 1839), Llansawel, Llanddeusant, Llanybyther, Myddfai, Newchurch

(Tithe map, 1846; a road now carried across it), Llandyssilio, Llangadock, Llangan, Llangathen, Llangeler, Llangynog and Llandawke.

² *Stone Crosses of the Vale of Clwyd*. So Hughes and North, *Old Churches of Snowdonia* (1924), p. xxv: ‘Where the ancient boundaries of churchyards can be traced, they are generally found to enclose a more or less circular space.’

Norman’s hobby, and in indulging it he doubtless spoilt the shape of many an old churchyard.

The churchyard of Pentreath in Anglesey, five miles from Beaumaris, has been enlarged, but a considerable portion of it is still circular, and along the side adjoining the new annexe the original *limes* is apparent in a bold sweeping scarp, and the surface of the older circular garth is considerably higher than the adjoining land. At Llangynog (Carm.) the churchyard, still circular, is surrounded by a pronounced vallum and an exterior fosse, in which latter are found fragments of burnt stone, ashes, and chips of flint, a ‘foreign’ stone in this district. At St. Harmon,¹ Radnorshire, the circular yard is girt by a continuous rampart rising in places 4 ft. above the interior surface and as much as 10 ft. above the ground outside. It is not surprising that such features should have been taken for the traces of ancient ‘camps.’ Thus of Llanwinio (Carm.) one reads² that ‘the churchyard, which is a rough pentagon, suggests the site of an early camp, and the suggestion is strengthened by the proximity of an old cottage named Dan y Gaer (“below the camp”).’ An early bilingual ogam-stone was found here, with the symbol of the wheeled cross. Again at Meidrim: the church (St. David’s) ‘stands in what has almost certainly been a prehistoric earthwork. To the west is a remnant of the bank that surrounded the position, and there are slight traces of the exterior ditch.’³ So too with Llanmerewig (Mont.): ‘the churchyard is nearly circular and has every appearance of having been a small prehistoric hill-top enclosure. It is surrounded by an earthen bank, outside which a modern stone wall has been built.’⁴ Speaking of the church of Llanbedr in Anglesey, R. Fenton wrote (1810) that ‘the present cemetery seems to be formed out of an old *caer*.’⁵ The same inference has been drawn of scores of churches which stand within *raths* in Ireland, and of yet others in Scotland and in England. ‘Camps’ in a sense these earthworks doubtless were,

¹ The church was described so late as 1908 as ‘a small and simple structure placed on a little eminence in a dreary plain surrounded by mountains.’

² *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, no. 589.

³ *ibid.* no. 624.

⁴ *Inventory Montgomeryshire*, no. 621.

⁵ *Tours in Wales (Camb. Arch. Assoc.* 1917, p. 265).

but not in the sense present to the minds of those who have called them so; for those who built them and dwelt within them were neither military men nor prehistoric, but the pioneers of monastic Christianity at any date between the fifth and eighth centuries, occasionally perhaps much later. There seems evidence enough to date the earliest of them as not earlier than the end of the fifth century, but when the fashion of building them ceased it would be hard to say; possibly not until Celtic monasteries ceased to be founded, and the Latin *regula* prevailed all over Wales.¹

Scattered up and down the country are to be found also in places where to-day is neither trace of there ever having stood a church, nor other hint of the fact than the name, fields bearing such names as Parc yr Eglwys,² 'church field,' or Parc y Cloddfa, 'graveyard field.' One such has been mentioned already (p. 90), a mile or so from the present church of Eglwys Cymmin; another lies two miles west of the church of Marros (Carm.). In the latter case there are still visible considerable portions of a series of three broad ramparts with corresponding fosses enclosing a circular area, wherein excavation brought to light the remains of a dwelling, apparently of wood, with a rude hearth or pitched floor, and the shards and other oddments which bespeak it a habitation. This was probably the site of the original 'church,' i.e. the cell of the holy man, at once his dwelling and his oratory. In the other case destruction has gone too far to allow any exact determination of the plan. To both sites attaches the tradition that 'the old church stood there.' Another Carmarthen-shire example is in the parish of Trelech a'r Bettws, where a field called Parc yr Eglwys still retains 'the faint traces of an oval enclosure'³; and there is a fourth in the parish of Llangynnin.⁴ In not a few cases the field itself is circular or oval, as for example Cloddfa⁵ Ffynnon, a now secularised

¹ There is a recorded case of an Irish missionary's building a *rath* upon the Scottish coast as late as the thirteenth century.

² Similarly Kirk Park in Scotland. 'In Mordington parish, Berwickshire, is a field known as Kirk Park, where the parish church once stood' (Mackinlay, *Pre-Reformation Church*, p. 126).

³ *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, no. 761.

⁴ *ibid.* no. 495.

⁵ Or Cloddfa. According to Silvan Evans *Cloddfa* = 'quarry,' *Claddfa* = 'graveyard': cf. the A.-S. *græf* = grave, *græfel* = quarry. Both the Welsh words are connected with *clawdd*, 'dyke' (cf. *claustrum*), the reference being to the 'dyke' surrounding the burial-place.

oval field in the parish of Eglwys Bach,¹ five miles south-east of Conway, and a mile or so north of the present parish church. There being no reason whatever to doubt that these names are ancient, the cases go to prove that wherever there was an *eglwys*, whether or no there was also a monastic settlement, the plan of the precinct was still circular.

About half a mile north of the present church (St. Matthew) of Llanelwedd, Radnorshire, is a small piece of ground known as Cae Henllan ('Old Church Field'), whence the local tradition declares were brought the stones of an older church to help in building the new one. The ground in question crowns an inconsiderable knoll, and is circular in plan, surrounded by an inner fosse and an exterior vallum. The vallum, 12 feet in width, rises some 3 feet above the natural surface of the soil without, and the garth again rises with the gentle swell of a depressed barrow to a height of some 7-8 ft. above the bottom of the shallow fosse. From fosse to fosse the diameter is 45 paces. The entrance seems to have been at the north-east. In effect the whole is an excellent example of the ring-barrow, and as such it would probably have been recognised but for the name attaching to it. Some tentative excavations (1910) which revealed 'the foundations of a rough wall and also some pitching,'² appear to confirm the local belief that it was actually the site of the original 'church' of the parish.

If in Wales there has as yet been recognised nothing equivalent to those monastic *cashels* and *raths* which are so abundant in Ireland,³ it is safe to say that it is only for the lack of seeking. The reviving interest in Welsh antiquities will probably soon detect some of the number. There is no reason to think that the outward forms of Christianity in Wales were in any essential point different from those of Ireland. There is known a considerable

¹ i.e. Bach ap Cadfan, a well-known saint. The present church, however, is dedicated to St. Martin, and its graveyard is rectangular.

² *Inventory Radnorshire*, no. 335. Not 50 yds. away to the east, on another slight knoll, is another unmistakable barrow of the 'bowl' type, apparently originally

revetted with stone; and about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the south-east is the diminutive disc-barrow locally known as the 'Cockpit.'

³ 'No vestige appears to remain of any early Welsh monastery' (Prof. Tyrrell Green, *Trans. Cymmrodorion Soc.* 1916-1917, p. 67).

number of Welsh ring-works, larger or smaller, enclosing the ruins of huts, and it is quite possible that some of these represent deserted monastic *llans*.¹ Such things must have existed in Wales, and a possible example is to be seen in the parish of Llangybi, Carnarvon,² three miles from the sea-coast of Tremadoc Bay.

The church of the village stands within a garth still in part circular, and there is proof that until recent years it was wholly so. The church is said to have possessed originally only an eastern light and a door at the west end; in other words to have been of that most primitive plan common to Ireland and to Wales. Somewhat to the north is a spring known as Ffynnon Cybi, 'Cybi's well' and on the summit of the hill (700 ft.) beyond the spring is a ruined ringwork of stone called Carn Pentirch. Within it is a vast litter of loose stone in which may be seen a number of circular depressions of small size, strongly suggestive of the ruins of bee-hive huts. One is greatly tempted to see here the ruins of a considerable monastic settlement of the familiar Irish plan. Welsh tradition declares that the bones of the saint—he was of sufficient importance to find a place in the *Lives*—were carried off (961) to Ireland by the pirate sons of Alboic, king of that country; and it is usually held that the resting-place of his relics had been at Holyhead, where also was Maelgwn's *caer*, which likewise became a *llan* of Cybi.³

The *Laws* of Howel Dda⁴ give elaborate details of the right of sanctuary (*nawd*, *noddfa*), the building of a church, and the demarcation of a graveyard (*corfflan*). Amongst

¹ They have probably been overlooked simply because of the mistaken belief that such *llans* should shew obvious traces of structural 'churches,' which in reality belong to a later age. In the parish of Llandyssilio-Gogo (Card.) is a farm called *Ciliau* (pl. of *cil* = 'cells'), and near it a circular enclosure 200 ft. in diameter, surrounded by a rampart of loose stones and divided into three compartments (Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*). Tyssilio, son of Cadell Deyrnllwg, belonged to the sixth century. In the parish of Llanddeiniolen (Carn.) certain enclosures used to be called *Corlanau Gwyr Môn* ('Folds of the Men of Mona'). *Corlan* in North Welsh and Cornish means a 'churchyard.'

² i.e. The *llan* of Cybi, the saint to whom

Maelgwn Gwynneth made over a royal *caer* (p. 91). He belonged to the house of Cystennin Gorneu (the 'Cornishman'), and was therefore a kinsman of Geraint, prince of Dumnonia (Devon and Cornwall). There is another Llangybi in Cardiganshire.

³ Dr. Mortimer Wheeler, in *Y Cymmrodor*, xxxiii (1923), pp. 98-101, pronounces the *caer* to be late Roman work, possibly a small coastguard station. St. Cybi's church, which occupies a large part of the small area, is a mediaeval structure. Holyhead is now (1925) wishful to resume its older name of Caergybi.

⁴ Codified in the earlier half of the tenth century. Different authorities give various dates between 926 and 943.

these recurs constantly mention of something termed the *mynwent*.¹ It is spoken of as if, like the church itself, it was something too familiar to need description, and the context shews that, again like the church, it was something included within the graveyard. The *Laws* speak of it as a *locus consecratus* of peculiar sanctity: the penalty for brawling therein is specially determined, as it is for brawling in the church itself; those entering it must leave their weapons at the gate of it; and it is one of the places wherein a man may walk about in sanctuary. It was further a recognised place for the holding of courts of law. Finally it was a place of burial for persons of special note. All the authorities are agreed that the name of it represents the Latin word *monumentum*.

Now in the earliest explicit directions for the demarcation of a churchyard (*corfflan*) it is laid down that the area thereof shall be thus determined:—

'A legal *erw*, with its end to the *mynwent*, shall be its breadth, and this encircling the *mynwent* shall be its compass.'²

The term *erw* is elsewhere as a rule used of superficial measure only,³ and that a measure of very variable extent.⁴ But four facts are clear: (1) the *corfflan* was something different from the *mynwent*; (2) the *corfflan* was conceived of as necessarily circular; (3) the *mynwent* was the central feature of the *corfflan*; and (4) the disposition of *corfflan* and *mynwent* had nothing to do with the presence or position of any structural church.

According to the accepted interpretation the *mynwent* was a court next to the church, the *corfflan* was 'a more outward yard encompassing the other on every side, in which they buried their dead.'⁵ There is no existing

¹ Specifically used in modern Welsh of a consecrated burial-ground, a churchyard, and so used in the Welsh prayer-book. Of unconsecrated burial-grounds is used *claddfa*. *Corfflan* is rarely heard, but in North Wales *corlan* ('sheepfold') may be used. The Welsh are historically correct in their refusal to extend the term *mynwent* to a Nonconformist burial-ground.

² Aneurin Owen, *Ancient Laws of Wales*, i, 140; ii, 360.

³ It would appear however, like the English rod and furlong, to have been used of lineal measure also.

⁴ Herbert Lewis (*Welsh Laws*, pp. 122 sqq.) gives the values thus:—

Venedotian Code (North Wales),
1 *erw* = 960 sq. yards English.
Demetian Code (West-Wales)
1 *erw* = 512 sq. yards English.
Gwentian Code (South Wales),
1 *erw* = 729 sq. yards English.

Another authority would argue it equivalent to 4,320 sq. yds. English, or little short of a statute acre.

⁵ Williams, *Eccles. Antiqs. of the Cymry*, p. 188, citing Wotton, *Leges Walliae*,

fact in Welsh ecclesiology to bear out this view, nor can those who hold it suggest any reason for the existence of the *mynwent* except that it was intended as a sanitary precaution, i.e. to keep the graves of the dead at a certain distance from the 'church.' All the evidence, however, shews that Christianity did not in early times take any such precaution, but rather the contrary; and if the *mynwent* was a place where the dead were not to be buried, the reason for its peculiar name (*monumentum*) is not apparent. That name, if it means anything, signifies that *mynwent*, then as now, meant a place of burial; and the evidence indicates that it was moreover a burial-place of very peculiar sanctity.

Opinions differ as to the value of the *Laws* of Howel, but while it is quite possible that they may have been greatly altered in certain of their details during the lapse of centuries, it is not credible that a law relating to the elemental and all-important matters of religion and burial should have been materially altered. These were not matters in which any one had an axe to grind, or in which the memory of custom could speedily fade. Statutory innovation in such a matter at such a date is almost unthinkable, and there is every presumption that the law quoted above embodies the normal practice of its time, though some corruption of the text may easily have occurred to fog the manner of its expression.

Now in regard to the *loca consecrata* of Celtic paganism it was seen that for their consecration there was required a burial—that they did not become consecrated places until the consecration-grave was made and filled. The Rev. S. Baring Gould points out that there is evidence to shew that the same feeling held good in regard to early Christian monastic sites: 'In order to secure a site for a monastery, some one must be buried in it,'¹ and when Columba made his settlement at Hy he consecrated it by the burial of a monk of his own retinue, a sufficiently obvious case of what we should to-day call human sacrifice. Other proofs of similar practices are adduced by the same writer, but the barbarism would seem speedily to have

i, 8, 12, 19; Pughe's *Welsh Dict.* s.v. ERW.
So also Richards, *Welsh Dict.* (Dolgelley,
1815) s.v. CORPHLAN.

¹ *Arch. Cambr.* xvii (1900), p. 256.

died out, for in describing the manner in which Ceadda hallowed the soil for the building of his monastery at Lavington (circa 654), Bede explains that he did it by fasting and praying for forty days, i.e. for a continuous Lent, 'for such, he said, was the practice of those from whom he had learnt the rule of regular discipline in consecrating to the dead by prayer and fasting every new spot acquired for the building of a monastery or a church.'¹ Ceadda's teacher was the Irish bishop Finan of Lindisfarne, the successor of Aidan, who had himself been a pupil of Columba in Hy. As Finan became bishop in 651, we may, infer that the earlier savage method of consecration was already set aside by that date.² Hy was founded in 563: so long at any rate persisted the pagan belief that a human life was necessary for the hallowing of holy ground. That belief abandoned, the hierarchy substituted another, that burial was not permissible to Christians excepting in hallowed ground. But it is a fact of everyday experience that the laity at large, at any rate in this country, have never wholly abandoned the older belief that burials themselves make holy ground, with the necessary corollary that the greater the number of the dead, the greater the sanctity of the spot.³

In the days of Howel the Good (tenth century), as his *Laws* declare, the *mynwent* was the basic fact, the point from which the whole cemetery began. In pre-Christian times the basic fact in a *locus consecratus* was the interment of a human being, and the same held good of a Christian *llan*. It follows that the two things must be one and the same—that the *mynwent* was originally the burial-place of the person, whether pagan or Christian, whose interment was the consecration of the whole *limes*, but that in Howel's time it had come to be the central point only, the place of honour, reserved either for the actual

¹ *H.E.* III, xxiii, § 218.

² So far, that is, as the bishopric of Lindisfarne, and the influence of its *alumni*, extended. We have no authority for the inference that it was nowhere followed after that date; and the practice of building a church or a monastery over the grave of any of the distinguished *fideles* who had made a more normal end, or over the place where had fallen any large

number of the faithful, has never ceased at all. As late as 1851 Gambier Parry, of Highnam (Glouces.), built a church over the grave of his wife at Highnam.

³ Illustrations are hardly necessary. To this day the road-men carefully renew from year to year the marks which tell where fell the victims of lightning beside a certain road in Sussex. Presumably they never heard of a *fulguritum* or a *bidental*.

burial, when opportunity offered, of some person whose bones would lend additional sanctity to the whole, or for the reception of relics of such a person.

To Celtic Christianity all graveyards were *ipso facto* sanctuaries, and it is known that this feeling was itself inherited from pre-Christian times. The *mynwent* therefore was doubly a sanctuary as the *Laws* declare. The right of sanctuary reached even to animals feeding in the churchyard, and the privileges of the sanctuary might extend to long distances therefrom, their boundaries marked by ditches, stones, or other means. In Scotland the stones thus used were called girth-stones,¹ and the limits of the sanctuary of Torphichen, Linlithgow, connected with a preceptory of the knights of St. John, were four, 'each about a mile distant from a central stone in the churchyard.'² There can be little doubt that the 'central stone in the churchyard' represented the original *mynwent*. Like the other girth-stones at Torphichen it was marked with a cross, and says Walcott, 'before the middle of the eleventh century there was always a central cross erected in churchyards.'³ This again can only be the successor of the stone or stones which marked the earlier *mynwent*. In course of time the older and wider privilege of sanctuary was restricted to the churchyard only, whence in the language of English documents of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries '*sanctuarium*, and its equivalents, almost always mean churchyard.'⁴ Still later it was, save in special cases, limited to the structural church or even to some part only of that church, and so far was the churchyard from affording sanctuary to a fugitive that his pursuers were accustomed to camp within it to watch him,

¹ A.-S. *Grið-stanes*. The ancient ruined church at Orphir in the Orkneys was commonly called the 'Girth house' as late as 1861 (*Arch. Journal*, xviii, 228).

² *New Statist. Acct. Linlithgow*, p. 49. So again at Ripon. Girald. Cambrensis (*Description of Wales*, i, xviii) says that the limit of sanctuary in Wales extended usually '*quantum armenta mane ad pascua exire et vesperi redire possunt*.' The church of the parish of Darowen, 6 miles N.E. of Machynlleth (Mont.), stands within the township of Noddfa, 'the place of sanctuary'; and three girth-stones, each

called *Careg Noddfa*, stood at as many points about a mile distant from the church.

³ *Sacred Archaeology* (1838), p. 192. The passage seems to imply that as yet there was no structural church on that spot, if it does not also imply that the churchyard was invariably circular.

⁴ E. Peacock on Myrc's *Instructions to Parish Priests*, v. 330, 'wythynne chyrche and seyntwary.' Wilkins' *Concilia*, ii. 183: '*Ecclesiarum sanctuaria, quae populariter coemeteria nominantur*' (Synod. Ciceritensis, 1292, cap.i.) The word *sacrarium* was occasionally used in the same sense; see Ducange.

and the earlier privilege of the churchyard required to be re-affirmed—but only partially—by law. Finally it came to be maintained that not even the structural church could afford sanctuary unless there could be adduced proof that such church had been properly consecrated by a bishop, a condition which ruled out a multitude of ancient churches of Celtic foundation.¹

Lingard² challenged the view that early British churches had no dedications, and that the Celtic 'saints' left their names to their several *kils* and *llans* in default of any other dedication. If the *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*³ and the *Life of St. Patrick* be accounted dubious evidence, we have still the authority of Bede for the dedication of John of Beverley's *mansio* to St. Michael,⁴ of Ethelburga's cemetery at Barking to St. Mary,⁵ and for yet another St. Mary's at Lichfield in the time of Chad.⁶ The variety of such dedications was probably small at first, so that in the rush of Christianity's first expansion there would come to be a perplexing multitude of Mary-churches, Michael-churches, and so on. To distinguish one from another there could be no more natural way than to speak of each foundation by the name of the earthly saint who was most prominently connected with it, whether as founder or otherwise⁷; and in the upshot his name would inevitably overshadow, or even actually efface the original dedication. When subsequently Roman Christianity supervened, there might arise such double dedications as that of Llanfair a Chyrig, where however we have no means of knowing whether the dedication to St. Mary (*Fair*) is original, or

¹ See Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life*, and especially appendix x thereto, citing a case from *Year Books* (Rolls Series, 1863) i, p. 541. The question whether the building was or was not 'a true church, duly consecrated' was left to the inquisition of the customary jury of twelve. Churchyard sanctuary was theoretically abolished in 1623 (Walcott, *Sacred Archaeology*, p. 157).

² *Hist. A.-S. Church* (1845), ii, pp. 381-385.

³ St. Cadoc's monastery at Llancafarn is dedicated to the Holy Trinity (p. 33); St. Beuno dedicates a church to the Lord Christ (pp. 14, 301); St. Gwynlliw makes a cemetery and a church in honour of St. Mary (pp. 150, 456); St. Illtyd's church is

founded 'to the honour of the Supreme and Undivided Trinity' (pp. 163, 472). The greater number of Trinity dedications are said to be late. Old Llandrindod for example has superseded an earlier Llando = Llanduw, 'Church of God.'

⁴ *H.E.* v, ii, § 362.

⁵ *ibid.* iv, x, § 281.

⁶ *ibid.* iv, iii, § 265.

⁷ Prof. A. Hamilton Thompson reminds me that the same thing happens to-day. Churches built by private benefactors, in industrial areas, and more especially in Lancashire, are often known popularly by the names of the founders rather than by their official dedications. For example, Christ Church, Didsbury, is usually spoken of as Roberts' church.

secondary and due to the Cistercian influence.¹ Of the long list of Llanfairs in the modern clergy-list, the most are distinguished by geographical or topographical epithets, while in Llanfairfechan and Llanfair-Talhaiarn the distinctive is a personal name indeed but no part of the dedication. The difference is like that between e.g. a 'church of St. Peter and St. Paul' and the church of Paul's Walden, i.e. of Walden belonging to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's in London.

The pagan Welsh buried their dead as did their kindred of Great Britain and Ireland. Barrows and cairns are to be found broadcast over the country. Mostly they are 'bowls' and 'bells,' but inferior forms of the ring-barrow occur here and there.² The disc-barrow proper, is very rare (ch. iii).

Megalithic monuments also, if numerous, are much less abundant than one would expect. There are few really fine dolmens,³ and cromlechs and *menhirs* rarely approach the proportions of those to be seen in England and in Brittany. The three principal types of megalithic monuments are however all represented, and the larger circles belong for the most part to the more Brythonic areas of the principality.

In Old Welsh writings are mentioned the burials of various notabilities of pre-Christian time: thus Bronwen the daughter of Llyr was buried 'in a four-sided grave (cist) upon the banks of the river Alaw' in Anglesey. In 1813,⁴ at a spot still known as Ynys Bronwen (Bronwen's Isle),

¹ Chyrig (Cyric) is St. Cyric, but whether a local Welsh saint, or the better-known St. Cyric of the Roman Calendar, is uncertain. The place in question lies north of Whitland (Carm.), and became the property of the Cistercians. The churches of Llanilid a Churig, Glam., and of Capel Curig, Carnarvon, are dedicated to SS. Cyric and Julitta jointly (*C.B.S.* p. 609, note). This however is a Latin conjunction; the original British pair seem to have been Curig and Ilud. See Baring Gould and Fisher, *British Saints*, s.v. *Cyric and Julitta*.

² In Flintshire the barrows 'are exclusively round of form.' In Montgomeryshire there is 'one exception to the otherwise universal type of circular sepulchral mound,' and this exception—the group of eleven mounds at Llanfihangel-yng-

Ngwynfa—is very possibly not sepulchral at all, and therefore no exception. So of Radnorshire. The citations are from the Introductions to the *Inventories of the Royal Commission for Wales and Mon.* (1911-). The same appears to be true of Carmarthenshire. The mound at Newmarket, Prestatyn, called Copp'a'r leni, is reputed the largest barrow but one in Great Britain. The list of known Welsh long barrows is very short.

³ One of the largest groups is that at Dyffryn (Glam.), one of which—the St. Nicholas dolmen—is claimed to be the finest in the British Isles.

⁴ *Mabinogion*. The matter was reported in the *Cambro-Briton*, ii, 71, and the urn found with the burial is now in the British Museum.

was discovered exactly such a grave with the remains of a female there buried; and there is no doubt that tough tradition had handed down not merely the fact of a burial which took place at that spot nearly 2,000 years before, but even certain details of that burial. In the light of such proof of the value of Celtic tradition in matters of sepulture the poem called *The Warriors' Graves*¹ becomes a very valuable document indeed. It purports to give the burial-places of some 200 of the hero-figures of old Welsh tradition; and while some of these are described as being 'near the church (*eglwys*)' or 'in the *llan*,' and may therefore belong to Christian times,² others are unquestionably pre-Christian burials. Among them are mentioned (v. 63) the grave of Mediawg, 'a quadrangular grave (*pedrifal*) with four stones round the front (*ae pedwar mein amythal*);' the grave of Meigen the son of Rhun³ (v. 17), lord of a cantref, 'in the circular space (*yn yr amgant*)'; and the grave of Tarw Torment, 'in the *mynwent* of Corbre.'⁴ Each of the three types of grave here described⁵ has its replica in confessedly Christian Wales. The 'circular space' of the grave of Meigen was perpetuated in every *llan* and in every *eglwys*; the pillar-stones reappear when St. Cadoc erects an upright stone near the burial-place of his architect Liugwri,⁶ and St. Illtyd buries his teacher Samson in his *llan* between 'upstanding square stones'⁷; and as late as the tenth

¹ *Englynion y Beddau*, from the *Black Book of Carmarthen* (twelfth cent.), printed in Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i, p. 309.

² This is not by any means certain, for *llan* may have been in use in the sense of 'barrow' before Christian times, if *eglwys* was not.

³ Possibly the person whose name is disguised in that of Caerhûn (Carn.) of which the church stands within a Roman camp. Rhun was a son of Maelgwn Gwynedd.

⁴ The old church of Llanllechid (Hughes and North, *Old Churches of Snowdonia*, p. 145). Apparently a personal name. Cairbre Musc was one of the traditional heads of the Deisi, who migrated from Ireland to Wales.

⁵ It may be added that in the same poem are mentioned the 'graves on the beach,' where were buried Sanant, Carwen, and others. This proves, if proof were

needed, that the Celts of Wales, like those of other countries, did not always make their barrows in the high places of the earth.

⁶ *Vita S. Cadoci*, 17.

⁷ 'In medio quadrangulum lapidum recte insistentium' (*C.B.S.* p. 171). If the exact number of stones is not here specified, it may perhaps be seen at the so-called grave of St. Non, mother of St. David, near to St. David's cathedral. [Like others of the saints, St. Non has more than one place of burial; her tomb is shewn in the parish church of Dirinon (explained as *Terra de Nonna*) in Brittany]. So too in the churchyard of Towyn (Merion.), where are 'four small menhirs marking off a quadrangular space. Graves are dense about it, but no interments are made within. Here originally stood the Cadfan stone, now removed to the church for preservation' (Baring-Gould and Fisher, *Lives of the British Saints*, ii, 6). Saint Cadfan (sixth century) founded the

century the *mynwent* was regarded as the burial-place *par excellence* of every churchyard. The pillar-stone, with or without ogams, is said to be a peculiarly Goidelic form of monument.¹

The *mynwent* was the central grave of a pagan barrow—originally perhaps the barrow itself, regarded as the memorial of some one great personage—the *raison d'être* of the whole, the consecration grave which made it a *locus consecratus*. The pagan grave might be marked in various ways—by a dolmen covered or uncovered, by one or more pillar-stones, by a grave-slab, or conceivably by nothing but the central position; but in some form or other it was invariably surrounded by the circular *limes* which denoted holy ground. When Christianity supplanted paganism the *limes* was retained as a matter of course, and the *mynwent* was likewise retained, but with a difference. Heretofore it had been the *raison d'être* of the whole barrow, which was certainly not generally intended to be used thereafter as a promiscuous burial-ground. But in the Christian period the *mynwent* was not so much the *raison d'être* of the holy ground about it, as an additional guarantee of the sanctity of that ground. If the *limes* were constituted, as in the case of the king's daughters of Clebach,² and as appears to have been the case with Avitoria at Eglwys Cymmin,³ expressly for the burial of some person or persons of distinction, then naturally the bodies of such persons would be buried in the centre, the place of honour, and would in fact constitute the *mynwent*. But such cases would probably be the exceptions, and most *llans* would of necessity make shift without the death of any one of the rank of a saint or a princess. Nevertheless the *limes* required its traditional

church of Towyn. Perhaps the four stones in the parish of Walton and Womaston, Radnor, have a like origin (*Inventory Radnor*, no. 615 B). The reader will remember that if the peristalith were limited to four stones, they might none the less stand on the circumference of a circle whereof the grave is the centre. This is the arrangement in some Scottish burials also (R. Munro, *Prehistoric Scotland*).

¹ There are scores of pillar-stones still standing in Welsh churchyards. In that

of Tregaron (Card.) are four, two of which have inscriptions, while the others are plain.

² p. 28.

³ The sanctity of a burial-place might survive the loss of its *raison d'être*. On the spot where had been murdered the shepherdess Machuta, St. Tathan founded a church (*ecclesia*, *martyrium*), but presently translated her body to his own *llan* at Caerwent. Yet the original *martyrium* is said to have survived to be the present-day parish church of Llanvaches, two miles west of Caerwent.

consecration by burial, as is proved by the story of the hallowing of Hy. Whether the body of such an inconsiderable person was commonly laid in the *mynwent* may be doubted. It is much more probable that in such cases the *mynwent* remained for the time being a cenotaph, until chance should provide an occupant of sufficient dignity. As a rule this would be when the founder himself died, so that the provision of a *mynwent* in that case reduces itself to exactly the same procedure as when Augustine builds his own mortuary church at Canterbury, and when Cuthbert makes provision for his own burial in his *mansio* at Farne.¹

In other cases, and increasingly as the cult of relics developed, there would be secured some relic or other to be deposited in the *mynwent* and serve the same purpose. The *Laws* of Howel Dda belong to an era when, this cult being at its height, it was felt that every new foundation must necessarily have its relics, and the *mynwent* was the spot reserved for their reception. In Ireland, it will be remembered, as in Man and in Scotland, *relic* (*reilic*, *rhullic*) was synonymous with *fert*, 'grave.'

Such buildings as were erected within the *llan* in the earliest Christian times would be exactly similar to those of contemporary Irish Christianity, i.e. mere huts or cells. In Wales as in Ireland originally the same roof covered oratory and dwelling house,² and the development therefrom of what we call a church would follow much the same stages. The earliest cells were certainly built of wood or of wattle in Wales exactly as in Ireland.³ Cadoc's

¹ Cuthbert expressly commanded his disciples never to leave his body, wherever that might be laid, and they followed it through many translations to its final resting-place at Durham. So when St. Cadoc died there was built over the sepulchre a church 'into which no Briton is permitted to enter,' lest he shall steal the saint's bones, and 'from the taking away of that very precious deposit, all the miracles and the whole influence of the saint should, together with the dust of his precious relics, be carried away' (*C.B.S. Vita S. Cadoci*, 36).

² *C.B.S. Vita S. Gundlei*, 8. The saint makes his residence within his cemetery, living there with his servitors and his cattle. His 'church' on the same spot is 'full of clothing, food, and many precious things,'

cheeses amongst them (c. 13). Obviously it was the saint's dwelling-house, larder, dorter and oratory all in one, for a robber (c. 14) steals 'the chalice and ecclesiastical vestments.' The building is spoken of as *templum*, *ecclesia*, and *habitationis locus* indifferently. So *Vita Cadoci*, 55; the saint builds a church (*ecclesia*) for his disciple Macmoil, 'that he might himself find lodging therein (*quo hospitaretur*),' on his journeys between Llancarfan and Gwent. In this use of the 'church' as a *hospitium* may be found the origin of some of the many places called *Tsppyty*, some of which may be a good deal older than is usually supposed.

³ At Trelystan (Mont.), 3 miles SE. of Welshpool, still remains a wooden church,

monasteriolum was of wood, as was that of St. Brynach, and that of St. Gwynlliw. Cadoc is said indeed to have built monasteries of stone at Bannawc in Albania (Scotland)¹ and in Brittany,² but these are emphasised as unusual cases. He had another *oratorium* at Neath, and this also was built of wood; and when the buildings at Lllancarfan were destroyed by fire, he rebuilt them still of wood only. If stone was used at all in the early days it would be mortarless, and no trace of any such buildings could well survive until our times.³ By the time when building in stone had come to be general, the practice of raising a chapel over the *mynwent* had also arisen.⁴ If the sanctity of the spot survived, the chapel would remain, at any rate in some instances, even when the times demanded a 'church' as we understand that term. There is at the present day a cardinal example in Wales at Clynnog in Carnarvonshire, where the ancient building, known as the Eglwys y Bedd ('church of the grave'), still stands in the churchyard beside the larger and later fourteenth-century church, and probably covers the actual grave of St. Beuno,⁵ the *genius loci*. At Eglwys Wrw (Pemb.)

said to date from the early part of the fifteenth century only (*Inventory Mont.* no. 908). The earlier name for Nannerch (Flint) was Capel Gwiel yn y Rhos, 'The wattled church on the moor.' The church of St. David in Ewias, now familiar as Llanthony Priory, was in the time of Girald. Cambrensis 'covered with lead and built of wrought stone . . . not unhandsomely constructed,' on the very spot where the humble chapel of David the archbishop had formerly stood, decorated only with moss and ivy (*Itin. Wales*, i, 3). This was in 1187, but even so late the narrator implies that the greater number of churches in Wales were still built of timber only, for he frequently mentions their burning (e.g. Llywel, near Trecastle, i, 1; others in Powys, ii, 12). The same writer tells us (*Desc. of Wales*, i, 17) that in his time the Welsh 'do not erect sumptuous palaces, or lofty stone buildings, but content themselves with small huts made of the boughs of trees twisted together, constructed with little labour and expense, but sufficient to endure for the space of a year.'

¹ *Vita S. Cadoci*, 33.

² *ibid.* 32.

³ Professor Lloyd (*Hist. Wales* i, p. 209) declares that there was no stone-built

church in Wales before the eleventh century. Probably there was none of squared and mortared stone, but it is only reasonable to suppose that there may have been some of unsquared dry masonry, like that of Cuthbert at Farne. Welsh, like Anglo-Saxon, has no native word for a 'mason'; *adeilad*, now used of any building, originally denoted carpenters' work. St. Kentigern built his monastery at Llanellwy 'of planed wood after the manner of the Britons, and not of stone, as it was not then the custom' (Rev. J. Fisher in *Arch. Camb.* 1914, p. 238). For the probabilities of the survival of any earlier churches, cf. such entries as that of *Brut y Tywysog.* under the year 1047, 'All South Wales lay waste.'

⁴ The earliest reference in Welsh to the consecration of an *ecclesia* occurs in the *Annales Cambriae*, sub anno 718; *consecratio Michaelis Archangeli Ecclesiae*. So *Brut y Tywysog.* 717. This has been equated with Llanfihangel Talyllyn, Brecon, but doubtfully. There are said to be 94 present-day dedications to St. Michael in Wales. It was one of the earliest and most popular.

⁵ See *Arch. Camb.* 1914, pp. 271 sqq. St. Beuno died not later than 642 (Baring

there stood until the days of queen Elizabeth a similar chapel, side by side with the newer church, and local belief forbade the burial of any one in the chapel 'because the saint would cast the body out.'¹

At Pennant Melangell (Mont.), the tomb of the eponymous saint (Monacilla), reputed an Irish princess, was included within a small chapel contiguous with the east end of the church, and long used as a vestry; but her remains have been removed and deposited in the churchyard.² This chapel was known as Cell y Bedd ('church of the grave').

In the parish of Llangristiolus in Anglesey is a circular barrow, about 6 ft. high at the centre, on which stood until the nineteenth century vestiges of a building known as Capel y Mynwent. The name is exactly parallel to that of Capel y Bedd at Clynnog and that of Cell y Bedd at Pennant Melangell.

These examples may throw light on some other cases where there are two buildings within one graveyard. They further explain why the present-day church, even in a churchyard which preserves its original circular form, is, if old, so frequently eccentric. In Howel's time it is clear that the *mynwent* and the *eglwys* were still distinct entities, and the *mynwent* occupying the centre, the *eglwys* was necessarily eccentric. Churches which occupy the central point of a circular garth will be edifices of a later time, accordant with the Roman way of building so that the church, or rather the altar within it, should actually overlie the tomb. Welsh tradition is not altogether without some indications of the fact.

The name of Merthyr (*Martyrium*) is common in Wales,³ as in Merthyr Tydfil (Tydfil was a daughter of Brychan) in Glamorganshire, Merthyr Cynog (Cynog was a son of the same Brychan) in Brecknockshire,

Gould and Fisher, *Lives of the British Saints*), and tradition says that Cadwallon ap Cadfan gave him the site for his 'church' in 616, in exchange for 'a sceptre of gold worth 40 (or 60) cows' (*C.B.S.* p. 17). Richard Fenton, writing in 1810, said that 'lately there were on the middle of the floor (of the chapel) stones piled as on a grave, and covered with a board on top' (*Camb. Arch. Assoc.* 1917, p. 324).

¹ See Fenton, *Tour through Pembrokeshire* (1812), p. 531.

² *Arch. Camb.* 1848, p. 137. The building, which is entirely devoid of architectural merit, is now derelict (1918).

³ A list of 29 examples is given in A. W. Wade-Evans, *Life of St David* (1923), p. 92. He remarks that they are 'found in those parts of Wales where Irish influences are known to have prevailed.'

Merthyr Dyfan in Glamorgan, Merthyr Mawr (Glam.), Martletwy (Pemb.), the absolute Merthyr (Carm.), and Mathry (Pemb.), 'church of the holy martyrs.' All these signify merely the 'burial-place' of some person, saint or other.

In the long interval of time which elapsed ere Wales was rich enough to need or to wish for churches on a larger scale,¹ a good many *mynwents* had lost their sanctity. The precise why and wherefore thereof may not be easy to explain in any particular case, but that the popularity of saints waxed and waned is a commonplace of hagiology. Possibly through some unforeseen accident the *mynwent* sometimes remained unoccupied, at any rate by its intended tenant, for not even saints can determine the place of their demise, still less that of their burial; and the Welsh saints were extraordinarily restless, rarely staying in any one spot for any length of time.² Sometimes the relics enshrined within it were stolen, as befell the bones of St. Cybi (p. 104); in other cases the relics were deliberately removed from their resting-place by those who venerated them. This is known to have happened repeatedly in mediaeval times, and a similar practice may possibly explain certain otherwise inexplicable happenings recorded in the lives of the earlier saints. When, for example, St. Patrick is ordered to abandon the *llan* which he had established in the *Vallis Rosina* (St. David's) and pass on to Ireland, he is said with seeming inconsequence to have 'raised from the dead' one Cruimther who 'had there lain buried near the sea for twelve (*aliter* fifteen) years,' and to have taken him to Ireland.³ On the face of it this is merely another example of monkish mendacity, but it becomes understandable enough if we suppose that Cruimther (the name means only 'priest') was the person

¹ There was a great impetus to architecture and outlay in the times immediately following the accession of Henry VII (Tudor) to the English throne. Very few buildings erected before the twelfth century would be of a quality to survive until that date, and probably not very many of those erected after 1100 would endure so long without very considerable repairs. Prof. Freeman has a good deal to say about (chiefly southern) Welsh ecclesiastical architecture in various papers of *Arch. Cambr.*

(II, i, 41, 108; ii, 177; iii, 161; III, ii, 231; iii, 307). The subject is interesting, especially when he writes of it, but the fact remains that the Welsh Celt, like the Irish Celt, has never achieved anything very remarkable in masonry.

² See on this point Baring-Gould and Fisher, *Lives of the British Saints*, i, pp. 3-4.

³ Rhygyfarch's *Life of St. David*, § 3. According to Nennius (§ 54) the saint in his lifetime raised from the dead nine several persons.

whose burial had hallowed Patrick's original *llan* at St. David's, and that his relics were exhumed and translated to Ireland to serve the same purpose again. The further assertion that the revived 'priest' was afterwards made a 'bishop' may be due to a confusion with some one or other of the various Irish saints named Donan; for Giraldus Cambrensis declares¹ that the real name of the 'dead man' was Dunawd, and both Donan and Dunawd are said to represent the Latin Donatus.

Again poverty might prevent the building of any permanent chapel, or the keeping of it in proper repair; and if no chapel were built over the spot, it is certain that with the lapse of centuries the original monument, whatever its form, would suffer. A time would, and did, come when the most devout of Welshmen forgot the significance of the rude stones which had meant so much to his forefathers, and saw in such things only the traces of paganism or, more abominable still, of papistry.² Were not such stones the familiar ornaments of pagan sepulchres on every surrounding hill? And did not Christianity fulminate against the worship of stocks and stones? They would be first neglected, then upon any convenient excuse overthrown or removed, and the *mynwent* would pass out of memory. The very meaning of the word was early forgotten: it came to denote the same thing as *corfflan*, the grave-yard at large.³

Again the case of Eglwys Cymmin suggests what probably occurred in a multitude of cases. The bones of Avitoria, the king's daughter, furnished the *mynwent* of the original burial-ground, and made the precinct there and then a *locus consecratus*, while as yet there was no structural church. To judge from what remains, her grave, which was in the centre of the *rath*, was surrounded by a number of small pillar-stones,⁴ i.e. a cromlech, and

¹ *Vita S. Davidis*, 2.

² This was the excuse advanced for the attempted demolition of the Ceryg Sanctaidd at Tafarn Diflas (p. 86, n. 4).

³ It is thus used in the Welsh prayer-book of queen Elizabeth.

⁴ These are large water-rolled stones, unquestionably brought from the sea-beach, and probably from beyond Pendine

Head, three miles away. Similar stones, presumably brought thither for a like purpose, have been found in the churchyard at Alphamstone, Essex, which was originally circular. The Indians of Central America go to the same or even greater labour, bringing water-worn stones from long distances to fence or mark a grave (Joyce, *Archaeol. of Central America and West Indies*).

amongst them one which told her name. In time the new *locus consecratus* superseded the older one at Parc yr Eglwys a mile away,¹ and at some date unknown there was built an oratory of wood. So far all was well. But Avitoria was after all but a king's daughter only, her father's darling doubtless, but we have no hint that she was distinguished beyond other women of her times in respect of saintliness ; and a father's love was no adequate substitute for greatness in herself. With him and his perished the memory of his dead daughter, and her *mynwent* gradually lost its sanctity and even its name. Then one fine day came a builder belonging to a generation that knew not nor cared for Avitoria or the meaning of ogams. He was altering or enlarging or repairing the church, and by happy chance, though he pulled up Avitoria's grave-stones to use them for material, he did not smash the ogam-stone from which we learn so much.²

This view of the origin and meaning of the *mynwent* accords with all the evidence of archaeology and satisfies all the requirements of the *Laws*. Such a sepulchral monument would be quite sufficiently roomy for a man to walk about in.³ It would naturally have an entrance,⁴ at which one might leave one's weapons. It would as naturally have a specially sacred character. And it would be the actual centre from which was measured, upon the radius of a 'legal *erw*,' the circular *limes* of God's acre.

Of particular significance is the fact that the *mynwent* was peculiarly a place of assembly for purposes of law and justice. It was not only a place of sanctuary ; it was also a *gorsedd*, a *cyrch*, a moot, and in a peculiar sense a ' holy moot.'

¹ This is the local tradition as to the relative age of the two sites.

² It was found in 1880, serving as a step in one of the churchyard paths. Others of the pillar-stones are still embedded in the walls of the church, where the builder put them, or half-buried in other parts of the grave-yard.

³ It is perhaps not needful to think that, from the language of the *Laws*, it must

be so large, but only that it was sometimes so. Four stones only, set at the corners of a square of 6 feet, would make an excellent *mynwent*, and would give 4 square yards to move about in, quite as much as fell to most captives of the time.

⁴ With the expression 'door of the *mynwent*' used in the *Laws*, cf. the Irish '*fert* with one door, two doors,' above. p. 18.