

CHAPTER XX.

WALES—(continued).

The Barrow of Churchways in Warren—Yspytty Cynfin Church built on a peristalithic Barrow—Churches and Stone Circles—Eglwys-y-Gwyddel—Taliesin and Round Churches—Pagan Monuments on Christian Sites—Upkeep of the Churchyard Wall—Funeral Games, survivals of—Origin of Urnfields—‘Meini Campau’—Dancing, etc.—Welsh words for ‘Circle’—West Wales (Cornwall)—Its connexion with Cambria—Bradanelice (Steep Holm)—Circular Earthworks in Cornwall—Cornish equivalents of ‘Llan’ and ‘Kil’—The ‘Rounds’ of St. Just and St. Perran—Upton Castle in Lewannick—Multitude of minor Ring-works—‘Church-fields’ and Rounds—Circular Churchyards in Cornwall—Early Cornish Oratories—Carn Brea and Porth Curnow—Christian Inscriptions relating to Barrows—Other Evidence.

That early Welsh Christianity, like that of Ireland, adopted out of hand the circular form of the pagan burial-place, is clear. The evidence will further prove that many of these churchyards were themselves neither more nor less than actual barrows of the familiar pagan type.¹

It would probably be impossible to find a more illuminating example of the first beginnings of Christianity in Wales than that provided by Edward Laws from Warren, a parish five miles south-west of Pembroke, in the very heart of Dyfed. The account, too valuable to be mutilated, is here reprinted in full.²

‘In 1800 Col. Lambton drew my attention to a large tumulus close to his house at Brownslade and about half a mile from Warren church. This we opened. The tump stands in a sandy field known as “*Churchways*”³ on the edge of the burrows⁴; it is *circular, with the diameter of 75 ft., and rather flat, not being raised more than some 8 ft. in the centre.* From its shape and

¹ Newell (*Hist. Welsh Church*, p. 23): ‘Old churchyards in Wales are often round, and possibly the ashes of rude pagan forefathers lie in many such with the ashes of their Christian sons and successors.’

² From *Hist. of Little England beyond Wales* by Ed. Laws, F.S.A. (London, 1888), p. 57.

³ The italics are not in the original.

⁴ The local name for sandhills.

construction a careless observer would pass it by as one of those natural hillocks of blown sand which abound on the burrows in the neighbourhood ; but on closer inspection, the surface is found to be strewn with bones, mostly human, which the rabbits have thrown out from their holes. We commenced operations on the south-eastern side, where the bones seemed thickest, and found that this portion of the barrow consists of blown sand, in which skeletons of men, women and children are *packed in tiers at least three deep*, like pigeons in a pie. Some of the bodies were protected by an enclosure of long water-worn stones about the size of ninepins, but *without any covering* ; others lay in the bare sand ; *they were all oriented*. With these bones we found *a piece of fine bronze*, which might have been an ear-ring, or a finger-ring, I think the former ; and a small brass ring with a rude pattern of spots punched on it. On the following day a small stoup, roughly hewn out of a block of red sandstone, 14 ins. by 8 ins. was found in this part of the tumulus. Mixed with the human bones were small quantities of *bones of oxen (bos longifrons)*, and *sheep or goats*, with a few *limpet-shells* and a *flint flake* ; but as these occur in the burrows it might be accidental.

'We then laid bare a place rather to the north of where we had been digging hitherto, and found a skeleton oriented, and surrounded by made ground [clay] and rough dry masonry, but without any covering. With this body there was a horse's nipper, a calf's tooth, and the jaw of a sheep or goat ; with some shells of oyster and limpet.

'By this time we had accumulated so many human bones, that decency suggested we should proceed to their re-interment. For this purpose we selected *the centre of the barrow*, and had not sunk more than 3 feet when we struck on a large slab (flat stones had hitherto been conspicuous by their absence). It proved, as we anticipated it to be, the covering stone of a *kist-vaen*, measuring about 4 ft. by 3 ft. In it we found portions of a human skeleton much decayed, mixed with charred bones and animal bones, and *apparently of an older date than the others*, which were all as well preserved as recent bones. In the kist-vaen there were *bones of oxen (bos longifrons)*, *sheep or goat*, and *roe-buck* ; a *well-burned, wheel-turned potsherd*, which resembled those discovered by Col. Lambton in the adjacent camp, and not like such as are usually found in barrows in Pembrokeshire ; and along with these was *a piece of chert about the size of half a brick with a cup bored on each side*, the borings being immediately opposite to each other with a diameter of 2 ins., and the same depth, the inside of them being as highly polished as though they had just then left the lapidary's hand. Then we came on a block of red sandstone 2 ft. long and 6 ins. wide ; on it were scratches like Vs and Ys, resembling those known as masons' marks. The last and most curious discovery was *a flat piece of limestone*, 7 ins. wide by 10 ins. long, *on which was roughly inscribed a cross within a circle*, with a V or arrow-head in one segment. We found nothing more, although we dug down to the sand ; still we discovered that *although the privilege of burial in this mound was so appreciated that in places the dead were laid in four tiers, no interments had taken place near the kist-vaen*.

'Having reserved three skulls for the inspection of the late Prof. Rolleston, we put the other bones in the pit and covered them up. We then began to look about the surroundings of our tumulus, and found adjoining the remains of a wall enclosing a space of about one-eighth of an acre, and at the

further end of the tumulus two small buildings. One of them has in the memory of man been used as a cottage ; the other, the labourers declared, was the ruins of a chapel, some saying they could remember an east window. It is very tiny, being only 16 ft. by 12 ft. and is pitched with water-worn stones ; it stands east and west. The native legend about it is, that "they" tried to build a church, but "the other people" would not let them, and pulled it down again.'

Prof. Rolleston pronounced the skulls to be those of a people 'not older than the Romano-British time.'

The excavator was in doubt at first as to whether the burials he discovered were pagan or Christian or both, ultimately inclining to the belief that they were those of an Irish missionary and his disciples and their descendants. In view of the facts adduced in earlier pages the conclusion is irresistible that the individual burials were those of a people who had indeed adopted something of Christianity, but had not by any means discarded all that belonged their earlier paganism.¹

Archaeology tells us that in pagan times a barrow was raised over the grave of the mighty dead ; that the dead man's grave (primary) was central to the barrow ; that this central grave was the *mynwent* ; and that lesser folk resorted to such mounds as burial-places. The evidence further tells us that Christianity adopted the circular form of the burial-place and also the central *mynwent*. This grave-mound at Warren shows the pagan and the Christian faiths and practices inter-blending. It had been built originally to be the burial-place of that nameless person whose *cist-vaen* occupied the central position, the 'honour-point.' He was buried in the huddled attitude of the Stone-age folk, in a cist of Stone-age type,² with the relics of his funeral feast about him, with the shard of

¹ The earlier spelling of Warren was Woran, 'what language I know not,' writes the late Henry Owen. In his *Pembrokeshire (Cymmrodorion Record Series)*, pt. ii, p. 342, note, he suggests that the original may have been some such form as Myfran, mutated to Fyfran, and finally written Woueran, which form is actually found in the *Black Book of St. David's* (1326) ; and he cites (op. cit. p. 314) other local names such as Crickwarren (Crugmaharren, Cilmarren) in Carm., Crickmarren (Crukmarran, Crugmaharen). There was a chapel at the last named place. These all

point to a personal name, and some such original as Llanfyfran or Llanfaharren, would explain the mutation.

² Cist-burial died out because Christianity insisted on earth-to-earth burial, but in Wales cist-burial continued to be practised even by the commonalty until the most recent times, and in the Latin church it is to this day the privilege of the chosen few. The cist has become a sarcophagus, but there is no other difference. Both St. Cuthbert (687) and St. Etheldreda (695) were buried in sarcophagi (Bede, *Vita St. Cuthberti*, xxxvii ; *H.E.* iv, xix, § 311).

pottery, and with the pagan symbol of the cup-marked stone. Each and all of these features were inherited from an immemorial pagan tradition. But the body had not been burnt, there was no funeral furniture in the shape of weapons and other personal worldly treasure, and, most significant of all, side by side with the cup-marked stone was another marked with the cross and circle, i.e. the older pagan symbol surcharged with that of Christianity. The dead man therefore was a Christian, but one at whose heart-strings the older faith still tugged hard ; or possibly at his burial his pagan kindred did what they dared to bury him according to pagan tradition, just as happened, we are told when Feidhelm and Ethne were buried at the Well of Clebach (ch. xvii). Either way his burial was the consecration of that circle of ground, and made it a *locus consecratus*. Thither therefore were brought others after him,¹ and in increasing numbers, until they lay three and four deep 'like pigeons in a pie' ; but none dared trespass upon the *mynwent*, the primary central burial, the consecration grave, even as none dared trespass upon the spot set apart in his churchyard of Towyn for its founder St. Cadfan (p. 111, note 7). These later comers were all Christian : they carried with them no grave furniture, they boasted no monuments, they lay all duly east and west, they were laid 'earth to earth.' This was unquestionably a Christian graveyard, and unquestionably one of the very earliest. And it was neither more nor less than a barrow.

The excavators found no trace of building upon the mound, no 'church,' because the whole dates back to a time when as yet churches were not. Later it would seem was built an oratory, a mere cell 16 by 12 feet, placed east-and-west 'at the further end of the tumulus.' Not in the centre, be it observed, for the centre still belonged as it had always belonged, to the nameless occupant of the *mynwent*. It was not even within the *original* circular precinct at all, for that was already full of burials which must not be desecrated. So the cell was built as it were

¹ Laws remarks that the bones of the later interments were in a far better state of preservation than those of the primary interment, whence he argued that there was a considerable interval of time between them. But as even the central interment

was Christian, the interval cannot have been very long. The difference in the bones is probably explicable by the different methods of burial: bones within a cist would perish far more quickly than others laid actually in the dry sandy soil.

on the edge of the barrow, and a new *limes* was presumably demarcated embracing within it the older one. In time there was made a new *locus consecratus* half a mile away, and a new church (St. Mary) was built there. The older one was supplanted, and at last forgotten, precisely as occurred at Eglwys Cymmin. But the name of the field preserves its memory to this day, for 'Churchways' is a transparent corruption of Church-haye, 'the churchyard.'

The first Christian place of burial in Ireland that we hear of was the *fert* at the Well of Clebach, and that was nothing but a pagan barrow under a new dedication. Here in Wales the earliest example forthcoming is again nothing but a barrow. In Scotland we shall find the same thing. It is plain that in each country Christianity took over the accustomed externalities of sepulture, and made them its own. This is not the same thing as to assert that Christian burials within pagan burial-places were officially sanctioned, but it is as certain as can be that in the days when adequate provision for the burial of Christian dead was still lacking, some of these would be laid by default within pagan tumuli.

Why was the original site at Churchways abandoned ? Possibly the reason was the advent of some new 'saint' who made his *llan* by choice, not beside the older *limes*, but at another spot, and in course of time brought this into precedence. Possibly there happened here the same thing that occurred at Eglwys Cymmin, and the sanctity which had belonged to the barrow at Warren was transferred to another *mynwent*. Or possibly the transfer was analogous to that promoted by archbishop Cuthbert in England in the eighth century (ch. xxv). One way or another such transfers did happen, as the many *parcau yr eglwys* suggest,¹ and as the case of Llanelwedd (p. 103) proves.

If fortune had willed it otherwise, and that nameless barrow at Churchways had continued to be the centre of the Christianity of its district, there would have come a

¹ At Dolwyddelan (Carn.) local tradition declares that the parish church, now situated in the town in the valley, once stood on the top of a hill known as Bryn y Bedd, 'Grave Hill.' There is no reason at all to question the truth of the tradition,

with the proviso that it need not mean that there was ever any structural church on Bryn y Bedd. A burial-place there certainly was, and therefore a *place* of worship (*eglwys*), but not necessarily any *building* at all.

time when authority or sentiment required that it should be decently fenced. Then the edge of the spreading mound would have been trimmed, a revetment built, and there would have resulted something precisely like hundreds of Irish *killeens* and scores of Welsh parish churchyards as they now stand.

The little church of Old Llandrindod, Radnorshire, is unquestionably built upon a simple bowl-barrow which formed the central feature of the tiny churchyard, itself also circular in the main, albeit distorted by recent small additions.¹ The church of Llanyre, in the same neighbourhood, stands upon the remains of a similar barrow, and has similarly suffered enlargement on a circular plan, the scarp of the original barrow remaining intact for most of its periphery.

Certain alterations made in 1890 in the church of Llandyssilio Gogo (Card.), 'made it desirable to move the pulpit, which was found to rest upon a huge unhewn stone, so large as not to permit of its being taken out of the building; and it was buried where it stood.'² There can be very little doubt that this unhewn stone was the grave-mark of some nameless great one there buried. In course of time there was built a church, seemingly actually over the *mynwent*, as at Clynnog and at Eglwys Wrw. Long afterwards, when pulpits came to be required, the stone was used as a convenient base whereon to set the pulpit. An earlier generation of Christians did not remove that stone because they knew what it really was. A later generation declined to remove it because it had always been there, though they had forgotten why. Last of all came our own generation, to whom neither reason was sufficient, and the most ancient stone in the whole fabric

¹ The rounded summit of the barrow makes an arc of a height of 5 ft. along the north wall of the church, which still retains its rectangular plan, and another arc only less pronounced along the east wall. Owing to the *natura loci*, the levels of the adjacent ground vary from as little as 2 ft. (south) to as much as 15 ft. (north) below the summit of the barrow. The church was restored in 1894, when there was found embedded face-down in one of the walls an extremely gross phallic slab. That the mound is of made earth and of considerable depth is proved by the fine growth of the trees (oak

and ash) which spring from its edge, only some 6 ft. away from the western corners of the building, and by the presence of graves close up to the eastern and southern walls. Elsewhere the natural rock lies very near the surface. Local tradition declares there was a yet older church of Llanfaelog (St. Maelog, a saint of sixth cent.) near by. Its site is described as 'almost suggesting a small encampment' (*Arch. Cambr.* 6th ser. xvii, p. 400).

² *Arch. Cambr.* 1918, p. 143. The shape of the churchyard is circular.

of the church, the veritable corner-stone, was 'buried' under the plea of 'restoration.'¹

The pagan barrow sometimes displayed as it were a revetment in the form of a peristalith.² This type was always rarer than others, but there remains at least one indubitable example in the churchyard of Yspytty Cynfin (Yspetty Cenven or Kenwyn; Y Spittye Kinwen, 1646), a chapelry of the parish of Llanbadarn Fawr (Card.), near the Devil's Bridge. Here the church (St. John) stands within a mounded circular³ yard, and built into the dry-stone revetment are several⁴ immense blocks, one of them doing duty as a gatepost at the entrance. The largest, which stands in the wall of the churchyard on the east, rises 11 ft. above the ground. Local tradition declares that there used to be many more of these megaliths, and that some were broken up to furnish material for the repair of the church or to build the retaining wall.⁵

This burial-ground at Yspytty Cynfin was evidently a peristalithic round barrow. Whether it was built to cover the bones of a pagan or of a Christian may never be known, but manifestly it came to be used as a place of Christian burial, and therefore of Christian worship; and in due course therefore it required to be fenced. It was fenced like other Welsh churchyards with a stone revetment, and this was naturally made by filling-in the intervals between the megaliths.⁶

Two very remarkable facts are recorded of this same chapelry. Firstly, the members of the community claim

¹ Had this stone once itself served as the preacher's platform? At the entrance to the hamlet of Iveston, parish of Leadgate, Durham, stood (or stands) a solitary monolith, and 'at the end of harvest one of the villagers used to get upon it and address' the others; whence came 'the tradition or fable that St. Ivo preached from it.' (Arnold-Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications*, i, 506). The church, a modern one is dedicated to St. Ivo.

² See above, ch. iii.

³ G. Eyre Evans, *Cardiganshire, Its Antiquities*, p. 131. The author tells me that the churchyard was enlarged in 1901 and that the older part is well-nigh circular in form and mounded up.

⁴ They are usually accounted three;

others make them five, by including fallen blocks now embedded in the wall.

⁵ See *Cambr. Journ.* 1858, p. 205; *Meyrick's Cardiganshire*; Eyre Evans, *Cardiganshire* (1903), p. 180. Cynfin is usually taken to represent Cenvaen, 'Stone ridge.'

⁶ The name Yspytty is usually referred to *hospitium* in the sense of property of some Latin abbey. G. Eyre Evans (*Cardiganshire*, p. 180) would so explain it here, the place having been a hospice of the Cistercian house of Strata Florida; and thus he would also account for the dedication to St. John. Conceivably the name may be older, and this church, like that of Macmoil, was founded by some saint *quo hospitaretur*; see above, p. 113, n. 2. The Roman trunk-road (Sarn Helen) passed at no great distance from the spot.

and exercise the right to choose their own Vicar; and secondly, there was annually held in the chapel a meeting 'for the purpose of athletic contests.'¹

Writer after writer during the past century has spoken of this spot as an indubitable example of the conversion of a druidical circle into a Christian church.² Whether such a view is right or wrong, depends entirely upon what the writers mean by a 'druidical' circle. There is no doubt at all that it is a genuine case of the Christianisation of a sepulchral cromlech identical in appearance with those of paganism. There is a persistent tradition that the churchyard of Llanfihangel Nant Melan, Radnorshire, was made within the ceinture of a stone circle. The garth is still circular, albeit no trace remains of any peristalith.

A third form of the pagan sepulchral *limes* was the simple ring of standing stones without a mound, the cromlech or stone circle proper, rarely of great area. In the parish of Llangenydd, Glam., is a field known by the name of Cae'r Hên Eglwys, 'Old Church Field,' in which stand the remains of a stone circle, itself known as Yr Hên Eglwys, 'The Old Church.'³ Another, in the Vale of Neath, is called Yr Hên Llan.⁴ Of yet a third, near Bridgend, also called Yr Hên Eglwys, the local tale is that here the inhabitants worshipped before the present church (at Lalestone) was built.⁵ On the mountain between Llanwddyn and Pennant Melangell is 'a circular enclosure surrounded by a wall, called Hên Eglwys, supposed to be a druidical relic, or probably the remains of an ancient cemetery.'⁶ On the Eglwysegl rocks near Llangollen are the remains of a large stone circle.

¹ G. Eyre Evans, *Cardiganshire*, pp. 179, 180. 'Probably,' he writes, 'it is the only parish in Wales which elects its Vicar on such a democratic system... The parishioners used to remain in their chapel through the night, trying their skill in such pastimes as casting the bar.' Yspytty Cynfin is not now a parish. He mentions (*loc. cit.*) that there used to be sports of the same kind at Yspytty Ystwyth.

² E.g. Malkin, *Scenery and Antiqs. of South Wales* (1807), p. 187; Curtis, *Antiqs. of Laugharneshire* (1880), p. 64; Prof. Tyrrell Green, *Aberystwyth and District*, p. 114. When (1797) the old cathedral of Arras was demolished, it was found that the foundations of the apse rested

upon huge monoliths, upwards of 15 ft. in length. The site (on Baudimont, where stood the Gallo-Roman capital of the Atrebates) was 'traditionally a scene of worship since pre-Christian times,' and the monoliths have been interpreted as the remains of a stone circle.

³ *Royal Commission Anct. Hist. Monts. Wales and Monmouth; Minutes of Evidence*, i (1912), no. 1898.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Malkin, *op. cit.* p. 187; Johnson, *Byways*, p. 31.

⁶ Lewis, *Topog. Dict.* s.v. *Llanwddyn*. This village and its original church are now drowned under the waters of Lake Vyrnwy.

Still more suggestive is the occurrence near Towyn (Merion.) of three sites bearing the name of Eglwys y Gwyddel.¹ One of these is a small circle with a diameter of 26 feet only, and of the six stones remaining the highest stood in 1874 but 3 ft. 7 ins. out of the ground.² Seeing that the word *eglwys* was never, so far as is known, applied profanely, it is difficult to explain its use here except on the supposition that the people who so used it either knew stone circles to have been places of worship, or saw in the circular plan of this cromlech the familiar symbol of their

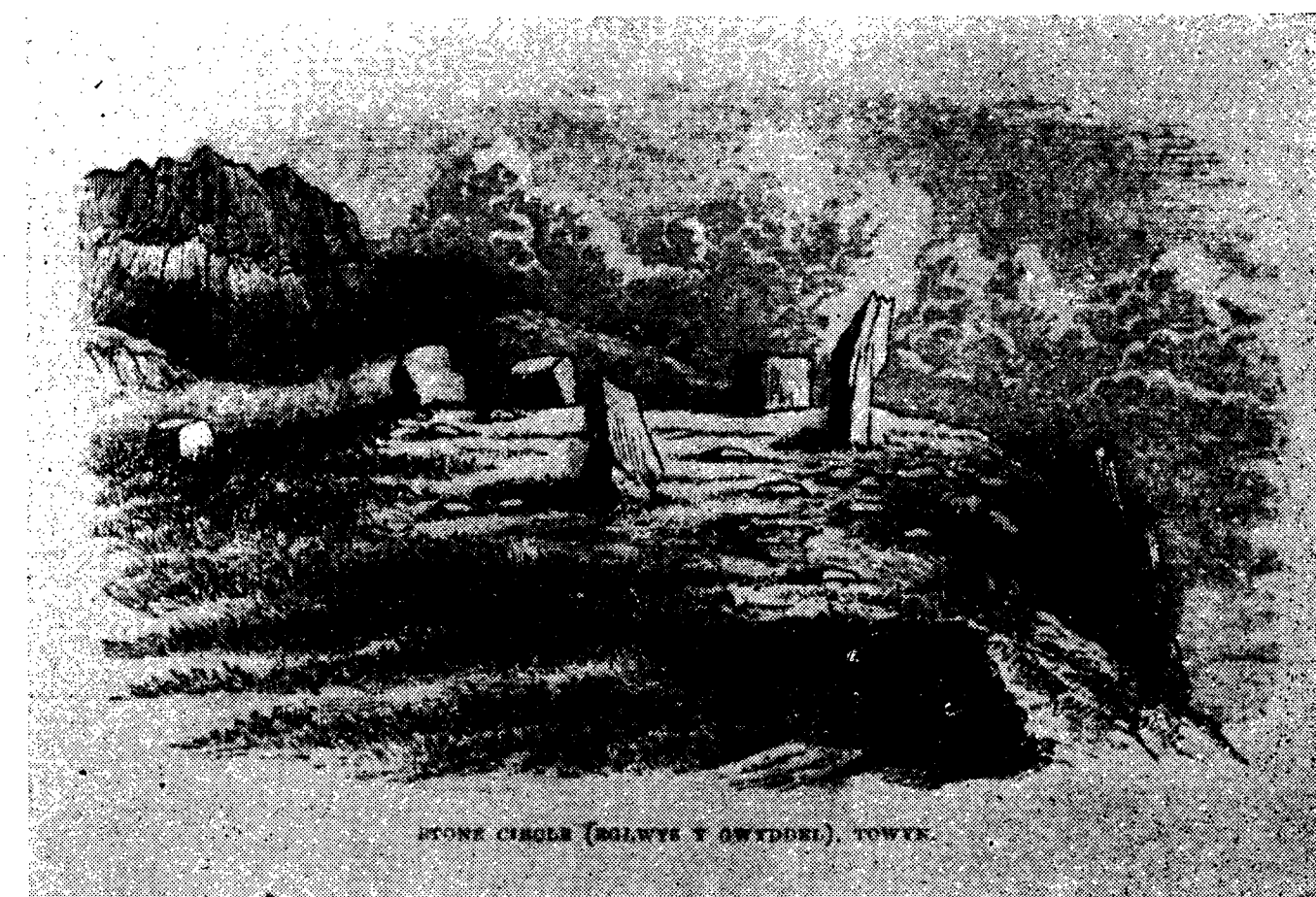


FIG. 5. EGLWYS Y GWYDDEL, TOWYN, MERIONETHSHIRE.
From a drawing by J. T. Blight in *Arch. Cambrensis*, 1874, p. 235.

own creed, the circular *limes*. In either case the name bears out the writer's argument. But if it be remembered further that *Gwyddel*, commonly now rendered 'Irishman,' is in reality the English word 'Goidel,' the question arises whether the names were not given to these circles by a people which had indeed adopted Latin Christianity, but remembered the essential difference between the Latin and the Celtic forms of the faith. In Celtic Christianity

¹ Baring Gould and Fisher, *British Saints*, iv, p. 196. They stand respectively on Mynydd y Bwlch Glas, in Coed Perffednant, and on Mynydd Ty'n Llwyn, and the name appears to vary between *Gwyddel* (sing.) and *Gwyddyl* or *Gwyddelod* (plural). The site

in Perffednant is marked by the remains of a very small building: *Inventory Merioneth*, no. 543.

² *Arch. Camb.* 1874, p. 234. There are signs that the number of stones was originally greater: *Inventory Merioneth*, no. 533A.

the church was of no importance, the circular *limes* was everything. This was a circular *limes*, and therefore by inference a place of worship, or of burial, or of both. It was in fact such a structure as might, by a Latinised Welsh Christian, contemptuously be said to be the sort of thing which, to the Irishry and their kindred Goidels, served for a church—Eglwys y Gwyddel.

There is another circle of stones on a hill near Yspytty Cynfin, said to be called 'The Temple,' and yet another in the same locality is termed 'Gilgal.'¹ Circles in Tir-y-Myneich (Llanbrynmair) and in Breconshire go by the name of Yr Allor, 'The Altar' (ch. x). A passage in one of the so-called poems of Taliesin contains the words *eclie retunde, phalatie Cesarie*² (? *ecclesiae rotundae, palatia Caesarea*), and while the poem as a whole seems thus far to have baffled the translators, the phrase quoted appears to mean 'churches round and palaces of Caesars.' Inasmuch as Wales is almost wholly innocent of any trace and any tradition of a circular structural church,³ it is unwise to cite the line as evidence that the earliest Welsh 'churches' were of that plan.⁴ It would be far more agreeable to the evidence to translate the words *eclie retunde* as 'circular meeting-places,' and to maintain that the writer of the poem was speaking of such things as the *Eglwys y Gwyddel* above described, or of those circular churchyards which are to this day ubiquitous in Wales, *eclie* (i.e. *ecclesiae*) being used in the original sense of places of Christian assembly. As the poem is as yet unexplained, and withal of unknown date, it is not worth further notice.

Welsh writers repeatedly assert that the Druids of Siluria embraced Christianity, that Christian worship was performed in the circles which were beforetime the scenes

¹ Horsfall-Turner, *Wanderings in Cardiganshire*; G. Eyre Evans, *Cardiganshire*, p. 180. The term *gulgul* is given as a Breton name for a stone circle. One suspects a reference to *Joshua* iv.

² Skene, *Four Anc. Bks. Wales*, ii, 111. According to one view it is one of the most ancient poems of those which bear Taliesin's name, dating from sixth century at latest; according to another, it was written in the thirteenth century.

³ The only ancient church in Wales

showing even a circular apse is said to be that of Llanfair P.G. in Anglesey, of which the foundations underlie the present building. (*Trans. Cymmrodor. Soc.* 1916-1917, p. 60).

⁴ As does Williams (*Eccles. Antiqs. of the Cymry*). 'Probably,' he says, 'the first churches were of circular form'—(p. 173). So they were if 'church' or *eglwys* be taken in the only sense which the words can have borne at the date intended, i.e. circular barrows at which Christians met for worship.

of druidic ritual,¹ and that the first priests of the new faith in Wales were themselves Druids. It were much to be wished that authority for these statements were forthcoming; in default it can be said only that they seem to be extremely probable. So much one may admit without committing oneself to all the claims of Bardic writers. Nothing would be more likely than that Druidism should seize upon the new and vigorous faith, seeking thereby to recover the position it had lost.

'Near Mare Cross [i.e. March Croes, now Marcross, near Llantwit], Glamorgan, is an ancient cromlech [dolmen] called the Old Church, the inhabitants believing that these rude structures were once places of worship.'² In Llanhamlech, Brecon, a ruined dolmen goes by the name of Ty Iltyd, 'St. Iltyd's House.'³ Like the Irish *teach*, the Welsh *ty* was frequently used of churches, and it is not impossible that dolmens so styled may at an early period have served the purpose of oratories.⁴ The church of Stainton, near Haverfordwest, is built over a pair of dolmens.⁵

Pillar-stones are extremely common in Wales. Numbers of them stand within the churchyards, ranging from the rudest untooled blocks to the most elaborate 'Celtic' crosses like those of Penally. They bear every kind of lettering from simple ogams through bi-linguals to pure Latin. 'Rude pillar-stones with inscriptions are sometimes found side by side with those having an incised cross, but no lettering, as at Trawsmawr in Carmarthenshire, and the inference is here also that both were erected at the same period.'⁶ A stone at Llanerfyl (Mont.) has the

¹ Williams, *Eccles. Antiqs. of the Cymry*, pp. 61, 69, 169; W. Owen Pughe, *Introd. to Llywarch Hên*, p. lx.

² Nicholson, *Cambrian Traveller's Guide*, 2nd ed., p. 491.

³ Williams, *Eccles. Antiqs.* p. 173. Camden (*Britannia*, ed. 1722, ii. 707-8) calls it 'St. Iltyd's hermitage or cell.' It is described by Westwood (*Lapidarium Walliae*, p. 67), who illustrates from the *graffiti* within it two figures analogous to the circle-and-cross design found at Warren (p. 263). He adds that 'within a few paces of it was a circle of stones called Maen Iltyd, some of which were remaining in Lhwyl's time.'

⁴ *Arch. Cambr.* 1919, p. 541, where is cited also, from Landeleau (St. Teilo) in Brittany, the small dolmen called Ti Sant Heleau, 'St. Teilo's House.'

⁵ *Arch. Cambr.* 1896, p. 354; 1898, p. 182. They were found about 4 ft. below the floor of the nave and were of small size, 'either small dolmens or large cists.' A fine ogam-stone bearing the wheeled cross was standing in 1876 'in the middle of the churchyard,' doing duty as a modern grave-stone. (*Arch. Cambr.* 1880, p. 292; 1881, p. 217).

⁶ Romilly Allen, *Mont. Hist.* p. 85.

inscription: HIC IN TUMULO IACIT ROSTECE FILIA PATER-
NINI AN. xiii IN PA[CE].¹ The wording declares that Rostece was a Christian and that she was buried 'in this barrow.' The 'barrow' in question was possibly what is now the churchyard of Llanerfyl: it is circular, and the stone stands upon it. At any rate here was a Christian who was buried in a 'barrow.' The same formula occurs elsewhere in Wales,² and notably on the Porius stone at Trawsfynydd³ (Merion.), and there is no showing that either monument is pagan. If it be objected that *tumulus* in these inscriptions means merely 'grave' (*sepulcrum*), that objection will not apply to yet a third case at Penmachno (Carn.), where is a stone bearing the Christian symbol of the *labarum* and the inscription: CARAUSIUS HIC IACIT IN HOC CONGERIES LAPIDUM (here within this pile of stones lies Carausius).⁴ The symbol declares that Carausius likewise was a Christian, and his gravestone actually surmounts a small cairn. Names of Christian import attach to many a Welsh cairn to this day, as to Tomen Sant Ffraid, 'Saint Bride's Grave,' in Cwm Teuddwr. A small tumulus, crowned by two large stones 6 ft. apart, in the parish of Glyn in Brecknockshire, used to be pointed out as the grave of the great St. Illtyd.⁵

'In a field in the grounds of Court Herbert, near the Abbey of Neath, stood some years since, and probably still stands, a tall upright menhir raised upon a small mound of stones, doubtless of pagan origin, but upon which, at a more recent period, the emblem of the Cross had been inscribed by early Christian converts.' So wrote Westwood in 1877, voicing the then accepted view that any such monument must, if uninscribed, have been necessarily

¹ *Inventory Montgomeryshire*, no. 398. The older reading of the name was RESTICE.

² Westwood, *Lapidarium Walliae*, p. 64.

³ The old reading of this stone was PORIUS HIC IN TUMULO IACIT. HOMO XTIANUS FUIT. Later authorities prefer to read the penultimate word as PLANUS, although unable to explain the meaning until Egerton Phillimore in 1919 suggested that it was an attempt to latinise the not uncommon Welsh *Wyneb clawr*, Irish *Clarinech*, a sobriquet meaning 'flat-faced,' i.e. disfigured by leprosy, a leper. See Westwood, *Lapidarium*, p. 161; *Arch.*

Cambr. 1885, p. 143; *ibid.* 1919, p. 252; *ibid.* 1920, p. 223.

⁴ Westwood, *Lapidarium Walliae*, p. 175; Mitchell, *Past in the Present*, p. 89. Westwood remarks that this case 'proves that the raising of cairns or mounds of stones is not necessarily evidence of the paganism of the person interred beneath the mound,' referring to *Arch. Cambr.* 1863, p. 257. For another example of an undoubtedly Christian stone standing upon a cairn, see *Lapid. Walliae*, p. 82.

⁵ Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*

pagan, if inscribed, necessarily a palimpsest. In the light of what has been said and seen in previous pages, this view becomes unconvincing. The usurpation of a pagan monument—menhir or otherwise—by Christianity may have happened sometimes; but that every such monument which bears a Christian symbol has been so usurped is a matter which possibly could not be proved, and in itself is highly improbable. The early Christians appear to have used precisely the same sepulchral monuments as their pagan forbears and contemporaries, and the presumption is that in the first instance they would not add any Christian inscription or symbol, this being a later development.

The old Welsh saying that 'Tis a good enough stone provided it be Christian' (*Da yw'r maen gyda 'r Efengyl*), would seem to be a genuine memory of those days of transition in which all the manifold variety of stone structures—menhirs and dolmens and cromlechs and the rest—erstwhile regarded as the necessary apparatus of paganism, were slowly winning to a new consecration. If a Christian stone were 'good,' the implication is that there were other stones which were non-Christian and therefore 'bad'; and it is further implied that the consecration alone mattered. Thus the saying becomes an explicit admission that there had been a time when menhir and circle might be indifferently pagan or Christian, and there was no outward feature to distinguish the one from the other. And this is precisely the conclusion to which independent evidence has brought us. None the less the words would seem to imply further that, though stone might be tolerated, there was something preferable, that is to say, the wooden structures which were, so to speak, the peculiar mark of the *regula Scotica*.

In the light of these and similar instances it becomes idle to discuss the question whether a Christian church ever usurped a pagan site. We have churches standing upon barrows of every kind, and in the closest association with every recognised form of pagan monument. We see the forms of the same monuments perpetuated in those above Christian graves, as the circle of the barrow is perpetuated in the circular churchyard. We have traced the Christian *mynwent* back to the primary interment, and at

Churchways in Warren we have seen a primary interment attended by abundant tokens of paganism and also by the Christian token of the wheeled cross. Further than this it is hard to see how it were possible to go, unless the dead were to rise up from their dust to tell us more. It would seem that there can be found in Wales an unbroken continuity of certain religious forms from the remotest days of paganism to this present year of grace. Mr. W. Clarke found, when professionally engaged in connection with the rebuilding of the nave, anhistoric urn-burials laid at a depth of 25 ft. below the present surface under the floor of the cathedral church of Llandaff. This may not prove a purposed continuity through the ages, but on the other hand a purposed continuity can hardly be disproved.

If the churchyard was originally a barrow, this at once explains the constant finding of urns and other evidences of supposed 'pre-Christian' interments within such precincts. At Llangorwen, 'in cutting a foundation for this church (1840) an urn containing some human bones was dug up on the south side, between the porch and the east gable of the nave; and since then, in digging a grave about 15 yds. from the church, and between it and the little river, more bones were found. In both places the earth was blackened, and appeared to have been acted on by fire.'¹ The case of the churchyard of Penmynydd in Anglesey, where each burial was accompanied by a white quartz pebble, was mentioned above (ch. iv). The churchyard of Marros (Carm.) was unenclosed in the first half of last century, and when the present enclosing wall was built (1868), there were found a number of large sepulchral urns.² The details of this discovery are unfortunately not so precise as could be wished, but it points plainly to the fact that this churchyard also was once a barrow; and that the barrow had become so much spread that in building the wall the line was drawn across a part of it. The same explanation may cover such cases as that of Wing, Bucks, where a number of skeletons were found outside the churchyard wall, but so near to it that they could only be regarded as 'strays,' and were duly

¹ G. Eyre Evans, *Cardigan, Its Antiquities*, p. 243.

² Curtis, *Antiqs. of Laughbarnesbire*, p. 322; *Inventory Carmarthenshire*, no. 621, note.

re-interred within the churchyard.¹ It is known however that interments were frequently made, not in the actual barrow, but around it, and it is quite possible that in this practice is to be seen the origin of urn-fields, of which the original nucleus, the central barrow has disappeared. As the evolution of the barrow was steadily towards a less and less elevation, such a result would in some soils inevitably follow.

The wall of the churchyard at Eglwys Cymmin used to be kept in repair by the farmers occupying the parish lands, each of whom was liable for the upkeep of a section proportionate to the extent of his holding. Built into the revetment are blocks bearing the initials of some of those responsible in the eighteenth century, the junction between one section and the next being sometimes very clearly marked. The same custom prevails, or has prevailed, in English churchyards, e.g. at Areley Kings in Worcestershire, and at Cowfold in Sussex.² In Ireland the Brehon Laws required each tenant to construct his share of the lord's *rath*, and in the Isle of Man 'owners of *Treens* were obliged to keep their portions of the churchyard and its fence in order.'³ It can hardly be doubted that the custom, attaching to churchyards, goes back to the provision made in the Brehon Laws, and is yet another trace of Celtic influence in the Church of the British Isles.

At Areley Kings the limits of the various sections of the wall—the garth is still in great part circular, but most of the wall has disappeared—were marked in the eighteenth century by 'mere-stones,'⁴ now no longer visible, and

¹ De Baye, *Industrial Arts of Anglo-Saxons* (1893), p. 125; *Archaeologia*, xxxv. pp. 379–381. De Baye says: 'it is found that the churches were built, if not on the sites of ancient cemeteries, at least very near them.' He cites further examples at Mentmore, Bucks, and at Lewes (? S. Malling). The same thing has been noticed in the case of many Manx *keeills*.

² Other examples are given by Addy, *Church and Manor*, pp. 133–134. A particularly good instance occurs at Llanwyddalis (Card.), where 36 parishioners were liable, their liabilities ranging from $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{8}$ share to a whole 'perk' (perch), or even a second perk. (Eyre Evans, *Cardiganshire*, p. 219).

³ A. W. Moore, *Manx Place Names* citing from the *Ballaugh Register* of 1600.

⁴ Burton, *Hist. of Bewdley*. Each section here was known as a 'panie' (? panel). Amongst those responsible in the seventeenth cent. was one Sir Harry Coningsby, who died 1701. He chose to erect as his portion of the fence a solid wall of red sandstone blocks, some 16 ft. long and 4 ft. high. The other persons concerned were presumably content with less enduring materials; at any rate there is no other trace of a wall around the garth, and to judge from the position of Coningsby's 'panie' the garth had already lost part of its circularity in his time. When he died he

possibly sunk into the ground. They were perhaps of no great size. But supposing they had been fairly large and durable stones, set upright along the boundary of a circular churchyard, one can easily see how later generation might find herein the vestiges of a true cromlech. Such a happening as this will hardly account for the immense 11 ft. megalith in the ceinture of the garth at Yspytty Cynfin, but the facts inevitably raise the question whether possibly there was some connection between the number of stones in a genuine stone circle and the numbers of the community to whom it belonged, whether as graveyard, moot, or temple.¹

There has been mentioned in connection with Yspytty Cynfin and Yspytty Ystwith (p. 125) something that looks like a survival of the funeral games which were a necessary adjunct of all commemoration of the dead. In Ireland the custom is scarcely yet defunct, and there are abundant traces of its survival up to recent times in all parts of England and Scotland. As regards Wales the evidence does not seem to have been so carefully collected, but there is no reason to doubt its existence. As these games in Ireland developed into the great fairs of the country; it is in the Welsh fairs that the evidence must be sought. There used to be a great annual sheep-fair at Marros (Carm.) on the patronal day (St. Lawrence), and the scene of it was round the churchyard. It was discontinued only some fifty years ago. A few fairs are still kept up, as for example that of Llanuwchllyn, near Bala.

caused himself to be buried under this wall of his building, and to be carved upon it the polyglot rhyming legend: LITHOLOGEMA QUARE REPONITUR SIR HARRY (A pile of stones. And why? Here doth Sir Harry lie).

¹ This suggestion has been often mooted; e.g. Hutchinson (*Hist. Cumberland*, I, 250) surmised that the number of stones forming the circle of 'Long Meg's Daughters' at Salkeld might 'denote the number of delegates entitled to be present at the convention there held.' As the Celtic tribal system otherwise set considerable store by numerical proportions (as in *tref*, *cantref*, etc.), there is no obvious reason why such a theory should be altogether wrong. The normal number of stones (10 to 12) in

the Aberdeenshire circles may very well have corresponded with some *theoretical* unit of population in that locality, and the frequent nineteen stones of the Cornish circles to another and larger unit in West Wales. The ancient Welsh name of the present parish of Monington (Pemb.) was Eglwys Wythur, 'the Ecclesia of the Eight men,' which seems to suggest that when that *ecclesia* came into existence, the number of freeholders was eight only. We find similar variations in the numbers of the responsible persons in English parishes: 24 is a common number, 16 not uncommon, and the figures vary from as few as 12 to as many as 48. See Addy, *Church and Manor*, pp. 257-267, and cp. the *Douzainiers* of the Channel Island parishes, whose number is usually 12, but may be 16 or even 20.

Known as Ffair Wyl Ddeiniol, it preserves the church's dedication to St. Deiniol.

Possibly a trace of these ancient games is to be seen in the name of *Maen* (pl. *meini*) *Campau*, 'Stone of games,' attaching to some of the Welsh megaliths, as for example near the great circle on the lower slopes of Penmaenmawr (ch. x), almost in the shadow of the great anhistoric fortress crowning the hill.¹ There being no space on the hill itself for such amusement, and no nearer open ground available, it is probable enough that this circle—it is known as the *Meini Hirion*—was in fact a *rendezvous* for something of the kind,² whether or no the participants remembered that the origin of their sports was a funeral-feast. They may very well have forgotten it, as the Romans had forgotten the origin of their *circus* and their amphitheatre. On the other hand such names may have arisen from the actual use of such spots as *rendezvous* on holidays—not at all unlikely in a thinly peopled land and amidst a scattered population—or from the same association of ideas as led Cornishmen and Mecklenburgers to dub so many of their stone circles 'Dances.' Yet even here the association of dancing with such monuments may itself be a case of genuine folk-memory: dances were as much a part of the old Celtic ritual as of that of the Greeks or of the Jews, and we know that they were part of the *cuitech fuait* of the Goidels of Ireland.³ We have seen dancing associated

¹ There seems to be a good deal of doubt to what megalith the name really applies. Some speak as if it were identical with the *Meini Hirion* at Penmaenmawr. Others say it was a single pillar-stone a little distance from the *Meini Hirion*. The author of the *Gossiping Guide to N. Wales* states confidently that it is a pillar-stone by the path from Penmaenmawr to Talyfan, and that beside it are the remains of another great circle.

² The usual place for all such constructions was outside the walls of the community, but a great stone in the *churchyard* at Efenechtyd, Denbighshire, known as the Careg Gamp, was 'formerly used in the rustic sports of the village' (Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*).

³ For some curious talk about the possible origin and import of old Welsh dances, the 'Cheshire Round' and others, see Peter Roberts, *Popular Welsh Antiqs.* Morris

dancing was the traditional pastime at Whitsuntide, he says, and 'in many parts of the country there were formerly patches of ground levelled for dancing, (*op. cit.* p. 127). In Homeric language the Welsh had their own *χοροί*. 'Till within the last few years it was customary for the young people of the parish [Meifod, Mont.] to assemble at this place (Ffynnon y Clawdd llesg) on the eighth Sunday after Easter to drink the water, and afterwards to retire to some green spot and spend the remainder of the day in dancing; a similar practice prevailed near a fountain of clear water on Gallt y Main, at the other extremity of the parish, whence, after drinking the water, the company retired to a fine green fenced on four sides like a Roman camp and called Bryn y Bowlliau, where they spent the rest of the day in athletic exercises. . . . The practice has been discontinued for some years.' (Lewis, *Topog. Dict.* 1843).

to this day with the *circus* at Ham Hill (ch. ix.), and we shall find other sorts of games associated until the last century with the once peristalithic ring-work at Kirkby Ireleth (ch. xxiv). Dancing was part of the Beltane sports of Scotland, which were themselves connected with 'druidical' remains (ch. viii), and in Iona St. Michael's Hill was the annual scene of a curious kind of cattle-dance. These odds and ends of evidence are the very flotsam of Time, but they are none the less evidence of what has been.

The Welsh name of *Meini campau* recalling that of *Plane an Gwariou* ('place of games') applied to the Cornish 'Rounds,' and that of Plaistow, which recurs in many parts of the English map and bears precisely the same meaning ('place of play'), it becomes a question whether the 'plays' in Cornwall too were not originally of some other kind than the miracle-plays of the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries. It may be added that one explanation suggested for the name of Maumbury (ch. ix), connects it with 'Maumet,' whence come also 'mummer' and 'mummery.'¹

Welsh speech has the words *cron* (*gron*) and *crwm* (*grwm*) meaning 'a round,' 'circle,' 'sphere'; and *crwn* (f. *cron*), 'round,' 'circular,' 'spherical,' *crwm* (f. *crwn*), 'bent,' 'curved.' These are all related to Latin *corona*, Greek *κορώνη*, English *crown*, and *crwm* is the first element in *cromlech*, as is the Irish equivalent in *Crom Cruaich*. Castell Crwn was the name given to two circular ringworks, each with single vallum and fosse, in Mynachdy ('Monk's Town') in Anglesey,² and in Scotland the same term is said to be applied to any circle of stones.³ Welsh has also the substantive *cant* (*gant*), 'an annular fence,' 'ring-work,' The Latin *circus*, *circulus*, reappear in the forms *cyrch*, *cyrchell*, equivalent in meaning to the more

¹ In Chaucer's time *maumetrie*. The word really signifies 'worship of Mahomet,' and arose at a period (twelfth cent.) when the Moslem creed was regarded as the type of all 'idolatry,' or worship of false gods. In view of the attitude assumed by the earliest Christian writers, alike in Italy and in England, towards 'amphitheatres' generally, it is not altogether impossible

that the name of Maumbury may be an echo of a similar feeling, and may preserve the popular belief that such a place was above all a *deofulgild-bus*.

² Lewis, *Topog. Dict.* Cae Crwn is a field containing hut-circles in Merionethshire (*Inventory* no. 159).

³ Watson, *Place-Names of Ross and Cromarty*.

common *cylch*, itself said to be related to *κύκλος*.¹ None of these appears to be applied specifically to any particular antiquity in Wales.

'West Wales' once included not Cornwall only, but much of Somerset and all of Devon, an area throughout which the Celtic element was very strong and very persistent.² Until the fight at Dyrham (577) Glastonbury³ was a stronghold of Celtism, and latterly at least of Christian Celtism, taking rank as one of the 'Three Perpetual Choirs' and boasting itself the oldest Christian church in England. Ina and his Saxons reached the Parrett and fortified Taunton about 700. Thereafter 'West Wales' meant the smaller area beyond the river. It was still readily accessible from the real Wales, for the sea-passage from Glamorgan was but 15 miles or so. The modern name reflects the earlier, for Cornwall literally means 'Peninsular Wales.' The final conquest of the country by the Saxons only occurred in the time of Athelstan (926).⁴

Tradition is full of allusions to the active intercourse between Welsh and Cornish Christianity. Cystennyn, surnamed Gorneu or 'The Cornishman,' is the reputed progenitor of at least ten great Welsh saints, including St. Cybi. Tradition tells of the activity of Saints David, Teilo, and Samson, in Cornwall, and existing dedications confirm tradition. As Llancarfan lies in that part of Wales which is nearest to Dyfnaint (Dumnonia), it is no matter of surprise that St. Cadoc should be represented as travelling hither. He particularly affected the islands of Flat Holm and Steep Holm in the Severn Sea. On one of these, then called Echni, he is said⁵ to have displayed his

¹ So Sylvan Evans and Sir John Morris Jones. Possibly *cylch* may be but another spelling of *cyrch*, just as in Switzerland we find *kilch* instead of *kirch*, both from *circus*. In *Triad* 23 of Dyfnwal Moelmud (*Myvyr. Archaiol.*, ii, 922) both words appear with identical meaning, *cylch* once, *cyrch* twice, and the sense in all cases is 'moot.' In the parish of St. David's the word survives in a sense analogous to the English 'township': the parish is divided into four *cylchbau*, respectively distinguished as *Cylch y Drêf*, *Mawr*, *Bychan* and *Gwaelod*.

² There is a considerable number of

purely Celtic church dedications in Somerset.

³ McClure (*British Place Names*, p. 275) endorses the view that its original name was Glastenic (*glasten*, Corn. and Bret. 'oaks').

⁴ Athelstan appointed to the see of Bodmin the Cornish bishop Conan, on the latter's submission to the see of Canterbury in 936. The Celtic Church of West Wales had been independent until that date, except for a temporary submission under bishop Kenstec before 870. Warren, *Celtic Liturgy*, p. 4.

⁵ C. B. S. pp. 25, 26.

miraculous powers more than once, and there also was buried one of his disciples, Gwalches by name. In the *A.-S. Chronicle* (anno 918) one of these islands appears under the name of Bradanrelice¹ ('the isle of the grave of St. Bradan'), apparently Steep Holm; so that the Celtic name would seem to have been for a time adopted by the West Saxons until supplanted by the Norse *holm*; and further there must have been some sort of Christian settlement upon the island. It is said that there are still the remains of an ancient burial-ground to be seen there.² The later priory of St. Michael on Steep Holm very probably occupied the site of that earlier foundation.³

W. C. Borlase remarks⁴ on the triple division of Cornwall according to the prevailing church-dedications and other indications. In West Cornwall and the region of the Land's End these are preponderantly Irish⁵; in North Cornwall they are Welsh; and in South Cornwall, and the vicinity of St. Michael's Mount, they are Breton. This is precisely what one would expect. The county was one in which met three several streams of influence from those three lands over-seas, and it is from the literature of those lands that we learn what little we know of the lives and acts of the saints of Cornwall. Literature of her own she has none to speak of. But the stubborn Celtism of the people is remarkable. 'Here at the quiet limit of the world' the Brython found in his turn an asylum with the Goidel whom he had supplanted, and here he has left some of his very finest moot-circles. The Saxon made but small impression here. There are a few names in *-stow* (Virginstow, Morwenstow, Warbstow, etc.) in the north, creeping down the western side of the peninsular as far as Padstow. In 1291 Padstow (St. Petrock's Stow) was

¹ In one MS. only. As the others have Steep Holm, the identification is clear. The final *e* of Bradanrelice may represent—*ea*, (island). Bradan can scarcely be Saxon, and is presumably Celtic. Kirk Braddan in I. of Man was anciently Keeill Vraadan (Braddan's burial-ground); which is exactly the meaning of Bradanrelice. But who this Bradan was is unknown. There are said to have been 14 saints of the name. The church of the parish of Brendon, near Barnstaple, is dedicated to St. Brendan.

² Murray's *Somersetshire*.

³ Rev. E. H. Bates Harbin in *Proc.*

Somerset Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc. lxii (1916), pt. ii, pp. 26-45. Leland is the sole authority for the statement that Gildas at one time took refuge on the island and there wrote his *De Excidio* (c. 560). A tombstone decorated with a cross is said to have been found on Flat Holm (*C. B. S., Vita S. Cadoci*, c. 25, note), but it seems to have been lost.

⁴ *Age of the Saints*, p. 122. He has chapters on Welsh, Irish and Breton Saints in Cornwall.

⁵ See H. Jenner, F.S.A. *The Irish Immigrations into Cornwall* (presidential address. Roy. Corn. Polytechnic Soc. August, 1916).

already known as Alderstow (The Old Stow), for it had been superseded by the new church of St. Petrock—a Welshman, says Leland, who had spent twenty years in Ireland—at Bodmin. But the only purely Saxon saints to leave their mark in the land were Dunstan,¹ Werburgha,² and Neot, the alleged kinsman of king Alfred.³

All over West Cornwall occur the most striking remains of circular fortifications of the typical Irish kind. Long before Polwhele's time it was surmised that these must be of Irish origin, and the belief that they are so is now fairly general. H. Jenner has pointed out⁴ that the well-known group of 'huts' at Chysauster, to which still attaches the popular name of 'The Chapels,' is to all appearance the ruin of an Irish monastic 'cashel.' This Irish influence belongs to the later part of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth centuries, the period of the first enthusiastic outburst of Scotie missionary zeal, and it came mainly from Munster.

Lan—(the Welsh *Llan*) is to be found all over Cornwall; it occurs more than 160 times, and frequently in parish names, e.g. Lanherne, Lanhydroc, Laneast, Lanlivery, Lanreath, Lansallos, and Landewednack. It was once still commoner; for example, Gulval was Lanesly in 1291.⁵ Even when the *lan* has dropped out of the parish-name, it frequently survives in that of the church-farm. The Welsh *Merthyr* reappears in Merther (with church of St. Cohan or Coan), a parish five miles west of Tregony, in Merthyr Uny, parish of Wendron, and in Mertherdarva, parish of Camborne. The last-named appears also as Menadarva, where *mena* represents the Breton *menebi*, *menechi* ('place of sanctuary'); and this again gives such other modern forms as *Menbays* and *Menas*. As in Wales

¹ See Arnold Forster, *Studies in Church Dedications*, ii, 102.

² Eponym of Warbstow.

³ He has churches at Lanlivery and Lanreath.

⁴ *Roy. Corn. Polytechnic Soc.* 17th July, 1913. He further suggested that the name of Chysauster might possibly mean 'House of the Sisters,' i.e. sisterhood, and point to its having been a primitive nunnery. A piece of land near the old manse at Aberdour, Fife, was still (1842) known as 'Sisters'

Land,' as having once been the site of a Franciscan nunnery (Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*). The name of Chysauster is said however to be Chy Sylvester in a Subsidy Roll of 1327, and the change is entirely accordant with Cornish phonetics. (Information of C. H. Henderson).

⁵ Madron, says W. C. Borlase (*Age of the Saints*, p. 128), was perhaps once Landith. But Madron itself, he states (*ibid.* p. 164), stands for Llanbadarn. Bridgerule was earlier Llan-Bridgit, and Perranzabuloe was Lanpiran in *D.B.*

and Ireland, the *ecclesia* word is rare: the Cornish form is *eglos*, which appears in Egloshayle and Egloskerry, and in Treneglos, Treveglos (cf. Welsh Trefeglwys), and Lanteglos (Welsh Llaneglwys). It was commoner however at one period: in *Domesday*, for example, the modern St. Buryan figures as Eglosberrie.¹ *Kil* is about as frequent as in south Wales, though it does not occur as a parish-name: Killannoon in St. Erth (the *kil* on the Down), Killagerrick in Duloe (the *kil* of the rocks), Kilgear in Boconnoc (the *kil* of the fort), Kilhellan in Tywardreath and Killahellan in Camborne (the *kil* of St. Hellan), Kilmar and Kilmarth (? the *kil* of king Mark), and Killyow, a plural form corresponding to the Irish *cealla* (Kells). *Lis* is very common. *Rath* appears not to occur at all, and *cashel* only in its Brythonic form of *castell*; but Dinnurrin (i.e. Dingerein, Dinas Geraint) was the name of a famous monastery of the ninth century, and may suggest the conversion of a secular *caer* or *rath* to ecclesiastical purposes. St. Dennis in mid-Cornwall is probably another example of the same thing, the Norman dedication having been prompted by the sound of an earlier *dinas*. There is still a circular entrenchment surrounding the church.²

These facts leave no doubt that early Christianity entered Cornwall, or re-entered it, with precisely the same outward seeming as it bore in Ireland and in Wales—in the form of the circular monastic precinct (*llan*) and the circular burial-ground (*kil*). There is a scrap of folk-memory pointing the same way in the local tradition that the chief of the Scotie saints of Cornwall, St. Piran (Kieran), taught the Cornishmen to build their peculiar ‘rounds.’³ He had, says the story, already taught them the art of tin-mining, and to protect the mines he introduced the ‘round.’ The Celts of Cornwall had mined tin for centuries before the saint was born, and they had also built Celtic *duns* as long or longer; but nothing is more

¹ Elsewhere Eglosveryan. Other instances from *Domesday* are Heglosenuder (manor) representing the present St. Enoder, and Egloshos, representing Eglos-Rose (Phil-leigh). Church-farms so named are common; e.g. Eglosderry (‘Oak Church’) in Wendron, Eglos-crow (‘Shed Church’) in St. Issey, Eglos-Erme in Erme, Egloshayle in Roche, Eglos-Merther in Merther, Eglos-Hellans in St. Stephens-in-Brannel. I owe these examples to H. Jenner, F.S.A.

² *Report Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, xv, 108.

³ Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England* (1881), p. 275.

probable than that St. Piran played a chief part in introducing amongst them the peculiar Irish monastic cashel.

It may be added that the occurrence of the vocables *din* (= *dinas*, *dun*) and *gear* (= *caer*, *cathair*) in the names of places which are known to have been at one period monastic settlements, is proof that their peculiar fortifications were a principal feature in such settlements in West Cornwall.

The ‘rounds’ at St. Just and Perran seem to be as old as any of the kind. Each is a perfectly circular enclosure contained within a vallum of earth and stone, and each has an exterior fosse. The arena at St. Just is 126 feet across, the height of the wall 7 feet above the arena and 10 feet above the fosse without, its width at the summit 7 feet; that of Perran has a diameter of 130 feet, a fosse 5 feet deep, and the wall rises 8 feet above the area. Each, when first constructed, might have passed for a native Irish *rath*, and each is sufficiently near to St. Patrick’s norm of 140 feet over all. Both have been converted into amphitheatral arenas by the simple expedient of setting tiers of seats along the inner face of the vallum. At St. Just there are six such tiers built of stone, each having a ‘tread’ of 14 inches wide and a rise of 12 inches, the flat summit of the vallum providing another tier. That of Perran has also seven rows in all,¹ but here there is no evidence of stones having been used. The seats are merely cut in the soil of the vallum.

When St. Gouzenou, the Cornish Winnow, was about to make a monastic establishment, he directed his brother St. Majan to take a pitchfork and draw it in a circle round the site selected. ‘St. Majan did so, and lo! the fork formed a deep moat, and cast up a mound of earth within, resulting in a circular enclosure defended by moat and embankment.’²

¹ The details are from Borlase (*Antiquities and Nat. Hist. Cornwall*) and Polwhele (*Hist. of Cornwall*, vol. i), who give plates illustrating both. Polwhele thought them to have been ‘originally designed for British courts of judicature,’ referring to Gibson’s *Camden* p. 17. The number of ‘rounds’ now remaining (according to *V.C.H. Cornwall*) is but five, of which two (at Newlyn East and at St. Columb Major)

are said to be undoubtedly modern. There were others, now destroyed, at Landewednack (near the church), at Ruan Major (also near the church), at Ruan Minor, and at Treleaze. They are almost confined to West Cornwall.

² Baring-Gould, in *Arch. Cambr.* 5th ser. xvii, 267, quoting from Le Grand, *Vie des SS. de Bretagne* (1837), p. 660.

The work known as Upton Castle, near Lewannick, would seem to be nothing but a typical Scotie *cashel* with its (later) oratory, of the approved type to be found alike in Ireland and in Scotland. The interior circumference of the *cashel* (which is very regular in plan, and built of dry stone roughly piled between two facing lines of flat elvan stones) is 240 feet. The entrance seems to have been at the north side, covered by something which in its ruined condition suggests a bastion and is perhaps not original. Within are two buildings: the first is a cell (24 feet square) abutting upon the face of the *cashel*; the other, also rectangular, but much larger (42 feet by 24 feet) and disposed east and west, occupies the centre of the *cashel*. Both buildings, the larger in particular, are of far later date than the surrounding wall. Local tradition declares that the place was used as a cell of the Priory of St. Stephen in Launceston, and it is probably correct.¹ There is nothing upon the spot to traverse the view that it was originally the *desertum* or *mansio* of some early Christian recluse, subsequently reconstructed and appropriated by later monastics. That all memory of the founder's name should have perished is not surprising. Cornwall, Wales and Ireland have saints in legions, but all have scores of such ring-works whose founders are wholly forgotten.

There is probably no English county in which there survive so large a number of smaller and feebler enclosures, mostly of circular plan, and all alike in their construction; 'Simple walls of earth and stone, with a ditch outside . . . scarcely a parish in the Launceston Division but has one or more.'² They are commonly written down as 'village-sites,' and in some instances they probably were such, but it is remarkable that a very large number of them are closely associated with a present-day 'church-town,' as at Linkinhorne, Lawhitton, and Crowan; while at Sithney, near Helston, is one which is now enclosed as 'a small field, roughly circular,' and known as 'The Garland.' 'There is a local tradition that it was once a graveyard. It is the property of the churchwardens.'³ The writer of the above suggests that 'Garland' may

represent *caer-llan*. It is much more probable that it stands for *gorlan*, which Polwhele gives as meaning 'church-yard, sheepfold.'¹ The same writer remarks upon the undefensible position occupied by many of these works: 'they stand on low ground, and in most cases where the land slopes to a river or a stream . . . commanded on all sides. . . . From this it would seem that, to the men who threw up these earthworks, the hills with their castles were of no moment.' On the other hand it is a regular characteristic of the early Christian settlement, alike in Ireland and in Wales, to affect the vicinity of wells and streams, and to avoid the higher ground.²

In West Cornwall there are no 'nucleated' villages. Each parish is divided amongst a number of farms, one of which stands beside the church and is therefore known as the 'church-farm' or the 'church-town'; but the genuine Cornishman will speak of any one of the others, with its commonly diminutive cluster of barns and byres, as equally a 'town.' He has forgotten his Celtic term, has adopted and keeps the Saxon term as it was understood before Chaucer's time. But further, on scores of such farms is to be found a field called in the tithe-maps the 'church field,' or equally often 'round field,' i.e. the field where once was a 'round.' Whatever these may represent, whether the original circular homesteads (*tates*) of the Irish townlands as described by Seebohm,³ the circular moot of a Celtic community, or that circular place of burial which from the eighth century was essential to every township, it is fairly clear that the Cornishman had learnt and still retains the word 'church' in a sense which it has ceased to bear in English for some 500 years—'the round.'⁴

¹ *Cornish-English Vocabulary*, in his *Hist. Cornwall* (1816). Similar place-names are common in Cornwall, e.g. Tregorland (anciently Crucgorland) in St. Just-in-Roseland, Gorland or Gurland in St. Just-in-Penwith, Gurlan or Gurlyn in St. Erth. They are exactly parallel to the survival of *Church* and *Kirk* in place-names upon the Saxon map, often where there is no discoverable church. In Devonshire, three miles west of Church Staunton, occurs Garlandhayes, which both in formation and in meaning is apparently an exact parallel to the common English Church-hay(es).

² In some of the coastal parishes the

church, as at St. Just-in-Roseland and at Mylor, stands actually on the shore and barely above tide-mark, exactly where one may believe a Christian missionary to have made his first landing and his home. Beside the church of Mylor stands an unusually lofty wheel-headed cross, 17 ft. in height, with a cup-and-circle mark decorating the front of the shaft. Tradition declares it to mark the grave of Mylor.

³ *Village Community*, pp. 223, sqq.

⁴ For the suggestion that such fields were so named as being made over to the parish-church in lieu of tithes, there is no warrant whatever.

¹ *Journal Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, ix, 344; xv, 114.

² J. B. Cornish in *V. C. H. Cornwall*, i, 470.

³ *Report Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, xv, 108.

The raised, revetted, circular or oval¹ churchyard is so common in Cornwall, in that part especially where Irish influence was most felt, that most people have never noticed it, or if they have, have not thought it deserving of comment. The assertion of Polwhele that in Cornish the same word (*gorlan*) did duty for a churchyard and a sheepfold indifferently, points in the same direction as does his further observation² that in Cornwall 'we use *lhan* for church, probably because the Druids... buried their dead in a *circle* or enclosure of stone.'

Amongst many examples of the kind may be mentioned the churchyards of St. Buryan and Newlyn East. There are others less perfect at Lamorna, Landewednack, Wendron, St. Erme, Madron and Towednack. Gunwalloe,³ originally circular, was altered in 1889; and the long-desecrated burial-ground of Merther Uny in Constantine, now used as a garden, is still of irregularly oval plan and still goes by the name of the 'churchyard.' Those of St. Mawnan, Philleigh, St. Allen and St. Dennis still show the circular area surrounded by a considerable vallum more or less well preserved. It is hardly too much to say that the circular area is recognisable in the case of almost every old churchyard, except where a temporary prosperity has swept away its traces.

The garth of Lewannick also is circular and revetted. The name commemorates St. Winnoc, a Breton of the fifth century, by marriage related to St. Non the mother of St. David, whose name is preserved in that of Altarnon. The church itself is dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, and was very early a place of pilgrimage. It boasts two ogam-stones, the vicinity abounds in wheel-crosses of the Irish type, and outside the schoolhouse still stands a pillar-stone, beside which was found an interment in a cist-vaen.⁴

The salient characteristics of the early Cornish oratories are thus summarised.⁵ The plan is that of a simple parallelogram of from 20 by 10 feet to 35 by 17 feet, the length being commonly just twice the breadth. The eastern portion was the chancel, demarcated by a slight

¹ There is a marked tendency in Cornwall towards the oval rather than the circular plan, and W. C. Lukis remarked (*Prehistoric Monuments of Cornwall*) that the 'ovate' form of barrow is 'usual in Cornwall.'

² *Hist. Cornwall* (1816), i, 133.

³ Illustrated, with other examples, in Blight's *Churches of West Cornwall*.

⁴ F. Nicholls and H. Dewey in *Journ. Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, lviii, 44.

⁵ By Rev. W. Haslam in *Trans. Exeter Dioc. Arch. Soc.* vol. ii.

stone step, for the chancel-arch is the rarest exception in Cornwall. The door is on the south side, and 'I have invariably found a stone bench running along the base of the wall on the inside, and the floor sunk 2 or 3 steps lower than the ground without the edifice.' As with the oratories of Ireland and Wales, there is always a well or spring close at hand. They are thus in all the more important features precisely like the earlier Scotie oratories.

The chapel of St. Piran, amongst the sandhills by Perranzabuloe ('St. Piran in the Sands'), undoubtedly stands upon an ancient site, quite possibly as old as the saint's era, but it is not in itself an original fabric, as the architectural details sufficiently prove. So says W. C. Borlase,¹ and he cites as perhaps the most ancient buildings in Cornwall the Chapel at Madron, that of St. Dellan in St. Buryan, and a third on Gurnard's Head, where the building, which stands within the vallum of a cliff-castle, is associated with a cluster of hut-circles.² None of these however shows any trace of the bee-hive method of building, for which one must go a mile south to Bosporthenis in the same parish (Zennor), where are two conjoined huts in bee-hive style, one circular, with a diameter of 13 feet, the other rectangular, measuring only 9 feet by 7 feet. There seems no avoiding the suggestion that these represent respectively the *habitaculum* and the *oratorium* of a recluse of the very earliest days of Christianity.³

W. C. Borlase excavated in 1879 the stone cairn of Carn Brea⁴ near the Land's End. Upon this had stood a 'chapel' of unknown dedication, which was destroyed about a century ago. The cairn was found to be sepulchral, and to have been used as a burial-place by peoples of very different periods. The surface-soil revealed relics of comparatively modern date, below which was a stratum containing remains attributed to the Roman era; below this again was a cist-vaen; and at the bottom of all an

¹ *Age of the Saints*, p. 107.

² *ibid.* pp. 51, 181.

³ The ground on the south is ploughed (1919) up to the wall of the 'bee-hive,' and here the writer has picked up scraps of pottery of Romano-British type.

⁴ Not the more famous hill of the same name near Camborne, which ranks as one of the finest hill-forts now remaining in Cornwall. The other was likewise fortified, and there are ruins of circular huts within its wall.

elaborate interment in a rude square stone-built pit covered over with its own oval mound. It would seem then that the barrow marking this original interment had, as so frequently occurred, attracted other burials in succession, the mound being raised with each fresh burial until it grew to be a conspicuous cairn—the first land to be sighted by home-coming sailor-folk. There seem to have been other cist-vaens, besides the one explored, which had been wholly or partially destroyed in the process of building the chapel.¹

J. T. Blight² raised the question whether this was a case of the accidental usurpation of a pagan *locus consecratus* by Christianity, or whether it was intentional. In view of the evidence it is at least possible that some of the burials in the cist-vaens were Christian; that these had been placed *more gentiliū* in an existing barrow; and that the subsequent chapel was a purposed occupation of a site known by tradition to have been hallowed by Christian burial. That the nameless person who built the first chapel³ here should have been ignorant of the real nature of the mound is wholly improbable.⁴

At Porth Curnow, a few miles away, in the parish of St. Levan, another chapel stood upon a mound in which was found, two or three yards from the walls of the building, the sepulchral urn accompanying the original interment.⁵ The size of the chapel (48 ft. by 20 ft.), and the facts that it had a chancel-arch, and that the chancel was of different width from the nave, prove that it was of no very great antiquity. Again it may be urged that the builders were ignorant of the true nature of the mound which attracted them. It is conceivable, but it is in the last degree unlikely.

Here at any rate are two Christian places of worship reared upon mounds which are known to have been barrows, in which the interments had all the usual evidences of pre-Christian date. Anyone who looks at the churches of Cornwall, of West Cornwall in particular, will feel a

¹ W. C. Borlase, *Age of the Saints*, pp. v–x.

² *Churches of West Cornwall*, p. 91.

³ The architectural features of the building shewed that, in its existing form, it was not of the earliest date. It had, for

example, a string-course round it (*Age of the Saints*, p. 181).

⁴ cf. the case of St. Guthlac at Crowland (below, ch. xxiii).

⁵ *Age of the Saints*, p. x.

doubt whether the greater number of them do not stand upon barrows. There is no other way of accounting for the curious recurrence of the rounded precinct, its markedly raised area, and—in most instances—its dominating position.

There remains however evidence yet more convincing—*littera scripta manet*. Amongst the admittedly most ancient of the inscribed stones of Cornwall is the Carnsew stone at Hayle, which records that HIC IN PACEM (*sic*) REQUIEVIT someone,—a lady apparently, a Christian most certainly—who lay ‘in the barrow beneath’ (HIC IN TUMULO IACIT).² The stone was found in, and still stands close beside, a tumulus, now largely destroyed, and it explicitly tells us that the earliest Cornish Christianity permitted the burial of the *fideles* in barrows.

The parish of St. Issey was in early days Egloscruc (Bp. Brantingham’s *Register*, 1375–1410) or Egloscruke (Stafford, 1410–1420).³ This means the ‘Church of the Barrow,’ or the ‘Barrow-church’; so the barrow was also an *ecclesia*, i.e. it was a Christian barrow. The name of the parish of Altarnon points the same way: it means the ‘Altar of St. Non,’ and ‘the earliest stone altars were tombs.’⁴ In this case the origin of the name is to be found most probably in the existence of a barrow consecrated by the saint and bearing as token thereof an *al fresco* altar like those to be seen at Inismurray. Borlase⁵ points out that the Cornish form *Altar* is Irish (*altair*), not Welsh (*allor*). Cornish tradition declares that St. Non, the mother of St. David, was buried here, but the tradition probably arose out of the name.

The peculiar wheeled-cross of St. Patrick is more common in Cornwall than in any other part of England, and a notable example of its rudest and earliest form,

¹ *Journal Roy. Inst. Cornwall*, 1872, p. 71.

² Hübner, *Inscript. Brit. Christianae*, p. xx: cf. the examples from Wales, above, p. 273.

³ *Age of the Saints*, p. 135.

⁴ *ibid.* p. 138.

⁵ He bids us also ‘remember fables of saints like St. Crantock bringing their alters with them, around which to raise their churches’ (*Age of the Saints*, p. 130). These

are no fables, but refer to the Scotie portable altars. Anyhow they reared their ‘churches’ literally round about their altars, for the church of those days was the barrow itself, within or upon which stood the altar, itself destined in some cases to be the saint’s tomb. ‘Tombs seem to have been the first altars, and mausoleums the first churches of Christendom,’ wrote Lord Lindsay (*Christian Art*, i, pp. 6, sqq.)

a mere pillar-stone with the *roth-fail* head, is to be seen at St. Clement's, the shaft bearing in degraded Latin capitals the inscription IGNIOS VITAL FILI TORRICI. It is rather singular that ogam-stones are decidedly rare in the county.