

CHAPTER XXII.

ROME AND IONA.

Christianity in Roman Britain confined to the Towns—St. Ninian at Whithorn—The Reason of his Failure—Bede's account of Romano-British Christianity—The 'Ecclesiae' not Structural Churches—Romano-British Temples—The Term 'Basilica' in Bede—Paulinus and Augustine—The Supposed Church at Silchester—Conversion of Roman Buildings into Churches—Movements of the Northern Tribes—St. Columba at Iona—Iona a Scotie Monastery—'Raths' in Scotland—Kirkstones of Stroupster—Old Deer—The Death of Odhbrain—Aversion to new Burial-grounds—Circular Church-yards in Scotland—The Knowe of Saverough—Hillswick in Shetland—Scottish Churches on Cairns and Barrows—Scottish Grave Monuments—Cist-burial—Orlygr in Iceland—The Apse in Scotland—The 'Mansio' of St. Cuthbert in Farne—The 'Mansio' of St. John of Beverley at Hexham—The 'Mansio' of St. Chad at Lichfield.

Wherever Christianity has come, the 'elder faiths' have always made a stubborn fight. The old gods may be conquered, but being gods they refuse to die. To this day the peasantry of Tuscany swear by the deities of pagan Rome and practise magic in the names of still older Etruscan divinities, even under the very shadow of St. Peter's; and the like paganism lingers yet more stubbornly in remoter lands, most of all in the erstwhile Celtic lands. The very word 'paganism' suggests that the new faith for many years made little headway outside the towns, and the word 'heathen'¹ conveys the same implication. There were Christians in Britain very possibly for two centuries before they gained public recognition and protection, but there is no shred of evidence that the country-folk were anything

¹ A needless attempt has been made to derive this word, like 'church' itself, from the Greek, but in any case there was always a felt association with 'heath.' See *N.E.D.*

Sozomen's assertion that Theodosius (*circa* 390) 'forbade the unorthodox to hold assemblies in the towns' implies that the country-folk were mostly pagan still.

but pagans. What Christianity existed was confined to the towns such as Canterbury, Silchester, Verulamium, and perhaps Caerwent.¹ The rhetoric of Gildas is hardly evidence to the contrary, and even his language applies to Bath only.² The Gallic revivalists Lupus and Germanus (429) are said to have preached, not in the churches only, but also *per triviam, per rura, per devia*.³ This Prof. Baldwin Brown⁴ takes as evidence that Christianity was not confined to the towns. It is certainly good evidence that *outside* the towns the *pagani* could boast of few or no churches. In the next year (430) Germanus, wishing to keep the Easter feast, caused his followers to build booths of boughs for themselves and a church of the same fabric (*frondibus contexta*) for the bishop.⁵ This was in north Wales. Evidently there was no existing church within some distance. Evidently also the temporary 'church' so constructed was not such as could accommodate a congregation, and the mass would be celebrated *more Scotico* under the roof of heaven.

Bede records⁶ that Ninian, himself a Briton who had been trained and consecrated at Rome, 'built a church of stone after a fashion unfamiliar to the Britons.' This was before 432. Ninian selected a spot in Galloway then known as Rosnat. He named his church *Candida Casa*, translating the name of the place near Ligugé where he had received his missionary training⁷; and its present name of Whit-horn (A.-S. *Hwit-aern*) is again a translation of the Latin name. This is the first structural church in the British Isles for the building of which we have any evidence. Bede does not call it a *basilica*, and its name of *casa* suggests that

¹ An aisleless rectangular building at Caerwent with a western apse and transeptal annexe has been held to be a Christian church (Ward, *Romano-British Buildings and Earthworks*, p. 253), and T. S. Muir (*Ecclesiological Notes*) figures an unquestionably early church of similar plan. The late Dr. Haverfield thought that of the smaller towns of Roman Britain 'most . . . had perhaps a tiny Christian church or two' (*V.C.H. Shropshire*, i, 209).

² *Hist. Brit.* §§ 12, 24. This was written circa 564; cf. Bede, *H.E.* II, xiv, § 133, of the beginnings of Roman Christianity in Northumbria under Paulinus; *nondum oratoria vel baptisteria in ipso exordio nascentis ibi ecclesiae poterant aedificari*.

³ *Vita S. Germani (Acta Sanctorum)*, Jul. vii, 224).

⁴ *Arts*, i, p. 162.

⁵ Bede *H.E.* I, xx, § 44. This chapter is omitted in the Saxon Version. For the procedure—provision of booths, etc.—cf. the remarks of Gregory to Mellitus, ch. xxvi.

⁶ *ibid.* III, iv, § 158, *ecclesiam lapideam insolito Brittonibus more fecerit*.

⁷ Archibald Scott, *The Pictish Nation* (1918), pp. 78, etc. Some of the places now called Whitchurch may have the like origin, but see p. 286. If Whithorn is sometimes called *Magnum Monasterium*, the epithet has no reference to size.

it was very small.¹ There must have been a Christian population in Galloway if, as the usual story goes, a few miles away was born (c. 372) St. Patrick, 'son of Calpurnius the deacon and grandson of the priest Potitus'²; yet Ninian's foundation failed to make good.³ It was Kentigern,⁴ another Briton (but consecrated in Ireland, and therefore of the Scotie rule), who resumed Ninian's work with more success in the latter half of the sixth century.

Ninian's date being some years prior to the great outburst of Scotie Christianity inaugurated by St. Patrick, the Britons of Galloway must have owed their Christianity, such as it was, to the earlier Romano-British Church. Now Bede is very emphatic in declaring that Ninian's training was strictly Roman: he was *Romae regulariter fidem edoctus*,⁵ and in Rome he had been consecrated bishop. If then his procedure was *mos insolitus* in the Galloway of A.D. 400, it is clear that the practice of these British Christians of the North was even at that date very different from the Roman practice. When Augustine met the Welsh bishops at Augustine's Oak (c. 602) he could say that their practice was 'in many points' different from that of Rome and the Church at large⁶; and while prepared to waive all other differences, he insisted upon the necessity of their conforming to the Roman rule in regard to the date of Easter and the rite of baptism.⁷ The other points of difference we are left to guess.⁸ One would certainly be

¹ The words *casa* and *aern* recall the Irish and Scottish *teach* (ch. xviii). Bingham (*Christian Antiqs.* bk. viii, i, § 10) remarked that it was 'not very easy to conjecture' why 'churches' should frequently be styled *casae*, and suggested that it was 'because of their plainness and simplicity.' The truer reason was that, in Scotie Christianity, they were originally the actual *habitationes* of the builders, and remained so in some cases down to the thirteenth century even in England (p. 238).

² Calpurnius was also *decurio* of his native place, which St. Patrick (*Confessio*) calls Bannauem Taberniae. If it had decurions it must have been a *civitas* with its own *curia*.

³ It was restored as the seat of a bishopric 727-796, and finally refounded as a Premonstratensian priory (twelfth century). Ninian was buried there in 432.

⁴ Cendeyrn, a Welsh Briton, nicknamed Mungo, 'Dear One.' He was consecrated

bishop of Strathclyde in 543, and over his burial-place is built Glasgow cathedral.

⁵ *H.E.* III, iv, § 158.

⁶ *ibid.* II, ii, § 93, *in multis quidem nostrae consuetudini, immo universalis ecclesiae, contraria geritis*. In II, ii, § 91, Augustine's *multis* is replaced by Bede's *plurima*. Augustine had previously asked pope Gregory's advice in regard to similar divergences between the Roman and the Gallic Churches (I, xxvii, § 60). Cf. again II, iv, § 97 of Laurentius, *Scotorum . . . quomodo et Brittonum . . . vitam ac professionem minus ecclesiasticam in multis cognovit*. He thought the Scoti better than the Britons, but was disappointed in them both.

⁷ No one knows in what precise point lay the difference.

⁸ Augustine began by demanding further that the Welsh should abandon their policy of ignoring the Saxons, and should unite with him in the work of converting that

the fashion of the tonsure ultimately settled in favour of the Romans at the Synod of Whitby (664). The British tonsure was probably derived from that of the Druids, or at any rate was objectionable to the Roman Church as reminding them of the druidical tonsure¹; yet Augustine, who had been counselled by pope Gregory to be conciliatory, is not recorded to have made any difficulty about it. It is not straining probability to suggest that others of the 'many' points of variance would be the prominence given by the Celtic Christians to the burial-ground, the form of that burial-ground, and the method of consecrating it; for all these, like the Celtic tonsure, were inherited from a paganism that was not yet dead. Other points would certainly be the insignificant place given to the structural church, the rudeness and simplicity of the Celtic oratory, the performance of all or almost all the ritual in the open air, the neglect of episcopal consecration of all 'churches,' and the use of one and the same building as oratory and dwelling-house. Augustine doubtless felt that he was carrying conciliation sufficiently far in waiving all these points and asking so little in return. But the Welsh, *toti mundo contrarii*, declined to be reconciled.

Certain other matters of difference are perhaps to be discovered in the canons of archbishop Theodore as given by Bede,² so far as they relate to the discipline of the clergy at large and of the monks in particular, for Theodore seems to have found in England a good deal of that individualism which characterised the Irish and Welsh Churches. Possibly also the practice of associating both sexes within the same monastery was in debate, and certainly the confirmed nomadism of the Scotie monastics.³ That there was even after the Synod of Whitby (664) a strong feeling of antagonism between the Celtic and the Roman rules in England is further indicated by what happened in the case of Wilfrid. Bright⁴ speaks of the 'deep and persistent antipathy' to that Romanising bishop, adding that 'in

people. This, however, was hardly a matter coming within the *regula* and the *mysteria veritatis*, and moreover it did not apply to the Celtic Church at large (St. Columba's disciples in Bernicia and Deira, for example).

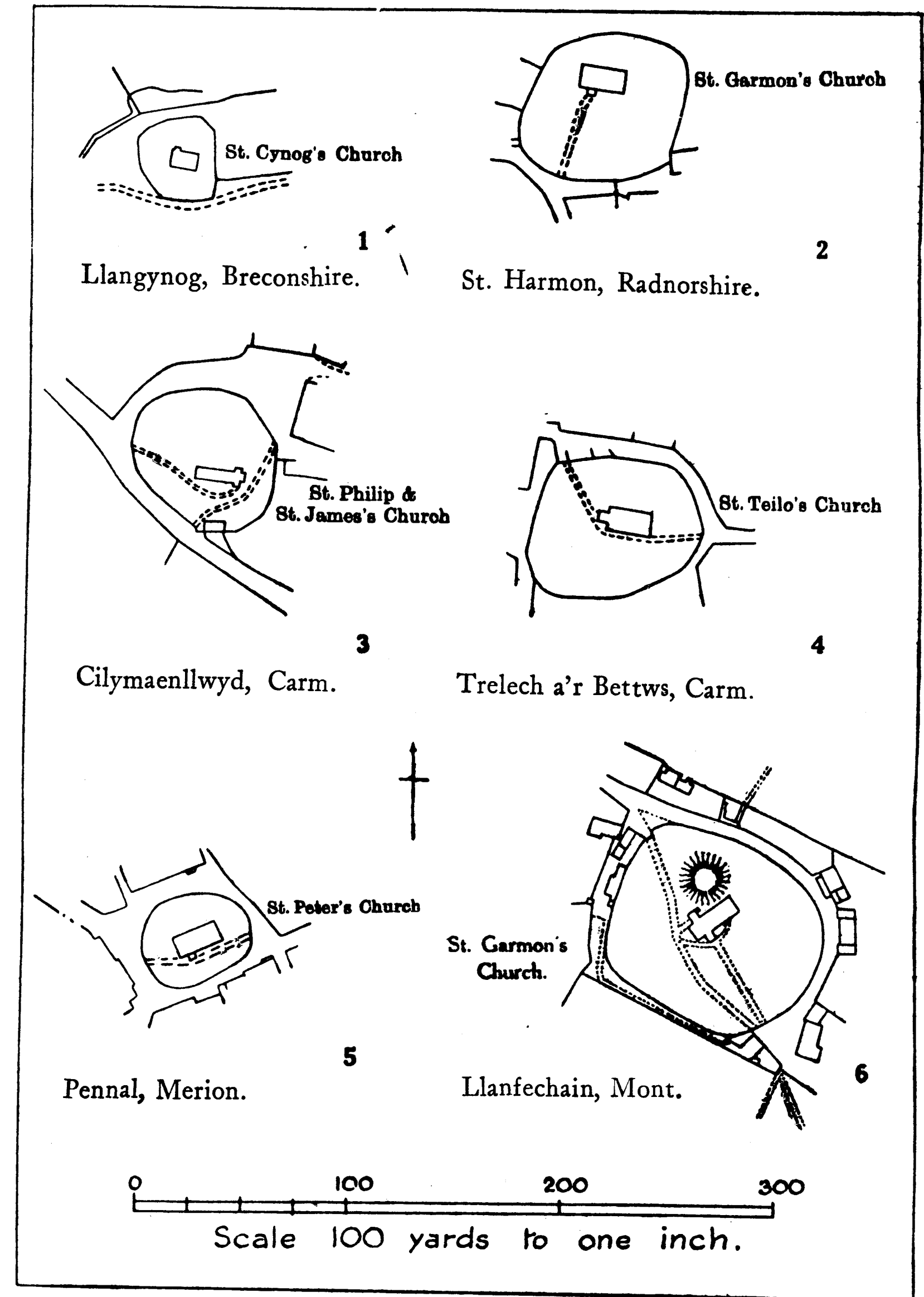
¹ The Druids seem to have shaved the front of the head from ear to ear, leaving the hair to grow long over the rest of it.

The Book of Armagh says that this tonsure was known (to the Christians) as 'the fillet of Hell.'

² *H.E.* IV, v, § 269.

³ cf. the story of Colman's monastery in Inisboffin (Bede, *H.E.* IV, iv, § 266).

⁴ *Lectures*, p. 398. Archibald Scott, *The Pictish Nation*.



CIRCULAR CHURCHYARDS IN WALES

(From the Ordnance Map, by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office)

Northumbria at any rate there was a powerful mass of opinion which in a practical sense might be called anti-papal.'

Bede's language in reference to Ninian's 'church of stone' at Whithorn is commonly taken to imply that the native Britons—as distinct, one must suppose, from the Romanised British population of the towns—knew nothing of churches built of stone or brick; it being tacitly or explicitly assumed that they were perfectly familiar with churches built of timber and wattle. There is ample evidence that the earliest Celtic 'churches' were commonly of wood, but there is little or no evidence that the earliest of these goes back to Ninian's time; and one fact which is prominent in Bede's pages is that to build a church of any kind was *mos insolitus* until the beginning of the eighth century.¹ But inasmuch as for centuries after the triumph of the *regula Romana*, churches continued to be built of wood and wattle, it is scarcely credible that the use of timber or of stone was a vital question between the Roman and the Celt. Bede was himself wholly Roman in his views: he scouted all that was not strictly Roman, and it is abundantly clear from his writings that to his mind a primary essential in orthodoxy was a structural church sufficiently large to accommodate a congregation, and preferably, though not necessarily, of basilican plan. Therefore when the Roman Paulinus builds a 'church'—it is called both *ecclesia* and *oratorium*—at York for the baptism of king Edwin, Bede apologises for both its circular plan and its wooden fabric as due to the need of haste.² Later he tells us that the same Paulinus built another *basilica* at Campodonum, apparently of wood, but he does not sneer at it therefor, nor indeed does he anywhere scoff at wooden churches merely because they are of wood.

Having regard to the essential difference which the evidence shows to have subsisted between the Celtic and the Roman way, it seems more reasonable to understand

¹ The same feeling lingered in Ireland until the twelfth century. When archbishop Malachy of Armagh built a church of stone at Bangor, 'an opponent protested against the innovation; *Scoti sumus, non Galli . . . Quid opus erat opere tam superfluo?*' (St. Bernard's *Life of Malachy*, c. 28).

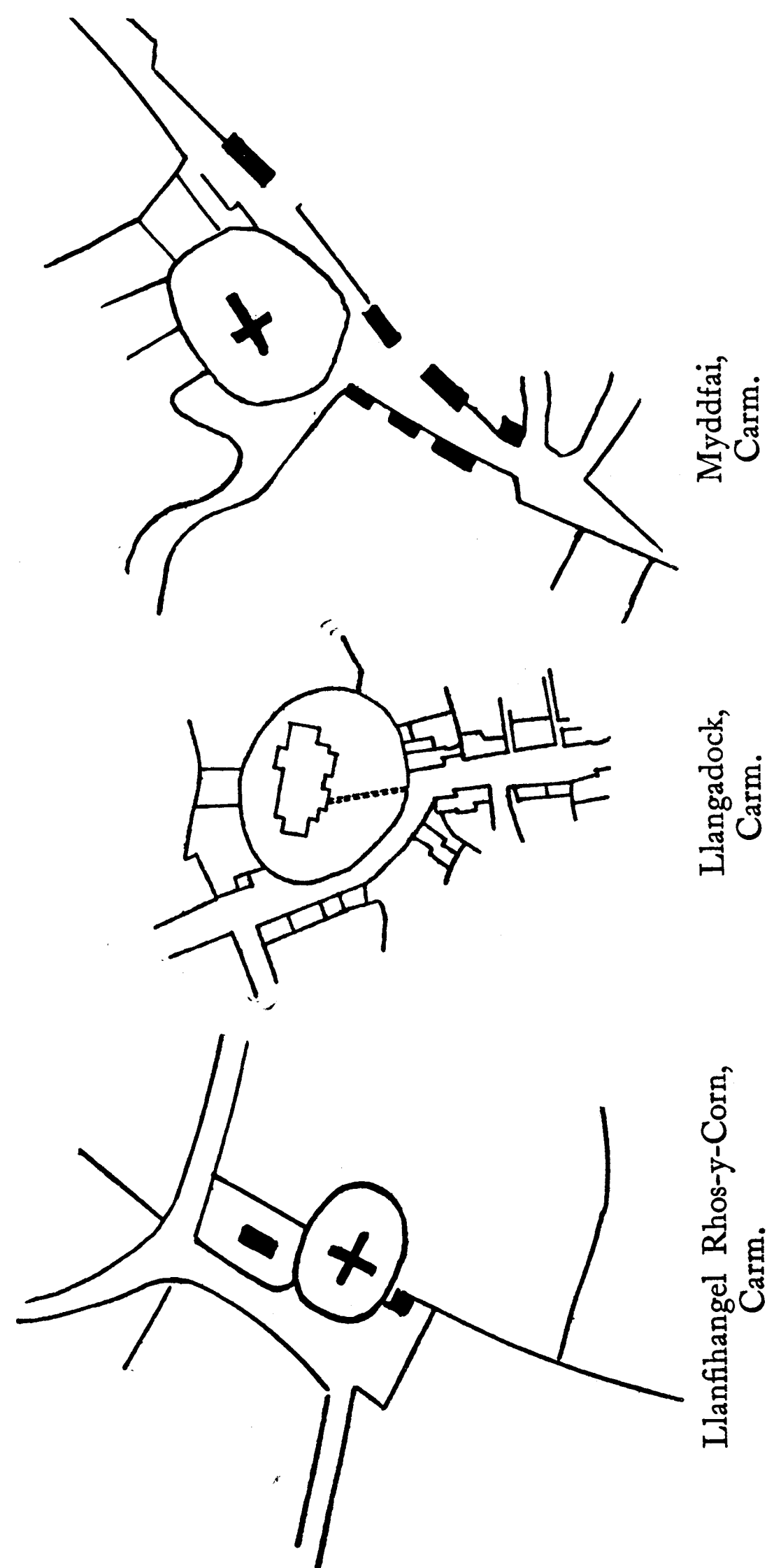
² *H.E.* II, xiv, § 132, *citato opere*. That it was circular is stated in the account of the subsequent building of the larger basilican church of stone; *præparatis ergo fundamentis in gyro prioris oratorii, per quadrum coepit aedificare basilicam.*

Bede's remark about Ninian to imply that he attempted to introduce the Latin way amongst a people who at that date knew nothing thereof; and read in this light the emphasis laid upon Ninian's strict Roman training acquires a point which otherwise is wholly lacking. Ninian failed at Whithorn just because his was not the Celtic way, which began with the graveyard and attached small importance to any building within it. Kentigern succeeded because he followed the Celtic way. It would seem indeed that Ninian himself was forced ere long to abandon the Roman practice, for we read that when Kentigern came to Glasgow some century and a half later, he found there, not a 'church,' but merely a cemetery formerly consecrated by Ninian. That had survived and retained its sanctity for a hundred and fifty years, whereas the 'church of stone' at Whithorn had failed.

This reference to Ninian and his work being the last which Bede makes to that earlier Christianity which had once prevailed in *Britannia Romana* and had been overwhelmed by the Saxon invasion, it will be well at this point to review the matter in the light obtained from the history of Christianity in Wales and Ireland.

It has been shown that the earlier Christian *loca consecrata* in Wales and Ireland were barrows, and that the structural church in both countries was a late development. As the Christianity of Wales is believed, and seemingly upon good grounds, to have been derived in the first instance from Roman Britain, however slight may have been the connecting thread, there arises the question, How came this early Christianity of Wales to be so unlike that which is asserted to have obtained in Roman Britain? Is it possible that one's mental picture of the Christianity of the Romano-British likewise requires to be modified?

Both the pagan Celt and the Christian Celt—the Cymru—paid extraordinary regard to the grave, small heed to any structural place of worship. The Romano-Briton was the heir of the one people, the parent of the other—it might indeed be said that he *was* the Cymru, for between Roman Britain and Christian Wales there was no hiatus of time or of blood. It would be very strange if in matters of religion he did not inherit something of the ways of his forebears; stranger still if the Christianity of the Cymru



CIRCULAR CHURCHYARDS IN WALES, SAME SCALE AS ON P. 179.
(From the Ordnance Map, by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office).

were not very like his own. The Cymru had their *eglwys*, which assures us that the Romano-Briton had likewise his *ecclesia*. But what exactly was the *ecclesia* of the Romano-Briton?

In the language of Christianity the word *ecclesia* meant originally the 'congregation,' and this is the only sense which the word bears in the Scriptures. From this was early developed the meaning of 'place where the congregation met.'¹ The meaning of a roofed building, a structural 'church,' is a yet later development and is no part of the word's earlier connotation. In the Greek East it was permissible, at least as early as 300, to use it in the sense of a special building,² but there is no reason to suppose that the word's evolution was equally rapid in all lands to which it came. In Latin Italy indeed the evolution may have been almost as swift, because the civilisations of Greeks and Italians were in those days pretty much on one plane, and the forces working for Christianity amongst both peoples were largely identical and fairly synchronous. But the civilisation of Roman Britain, high though it may have been, was by no means on the same plane: the mass of the population, even in the most progressive parts of the province, was wholly different in culture³ as in race; and any forces there working for Christianity, if identical in kind, were far feebler and came much later into the field. We should not expect the evolution of a structural church to have been as rapid here as in Italy and the Greek lands, and there is no evidence that it was so.

The point may be illustrated from Roman paganism in Britain. That system had a clear field and a continuous

¹ Smith, *Dict. Christian Antiqs.* i, 366, etc.

² See further below, ch. xxviii, where it is shown that the evolution of the building out of the grave was precisely the same in the Christianity of the East and of Italy as it was in that of the Celtic lands. The only difference was in point of rapidity, as was to be expected from the differences in civilisation. In the Greek East *ἐκκλησία* did not begin to mean a structural church until 250 years after the death of our Lord: it had not wholly usurped that meaning until at least another 50 years later. So with the Latin *ecclesia* in Italy. The basilican plan did not become dominant until about 400, at the very moment when

the Romans were beginning to think of leaving Britain. They did not return (in the person of Augustine) for 300 years, and by that time the Roman *ecclesia*, like much else in Roman Christianity, was stereotyped.

³ The latest pronouncement on this matter is by Prof. F. Haverfield in *The Romanization of Britain*, and from the evidence there assembled it would seem that the culture of the province was by no means as high as the author would wish it to appear. For another estimate, much less flattering, see Vinogradoff, *Growth of the Manor* (1905), pp. 37 sqq.: J. S. Reid, *Municipalities of the Roman Empire* (1913).

career of at least 250 years, during which time it was the official religion, and was further backed by all that policy could do to help it.¹ The temples therefore of Roman Britain should have been both many and magnificent. They were mostly neither the one nor the other. One of the outstanding facts of archaeology is the fewness of the remains of indubitable Roman temples here, and the comparative poverty of the few that are known. There seem to have been few even in the great cities of the island, and those in no wise large or elaborate. In the smaller towns we must perhaps admit that they existed, but their *reliquiae* are extremely small. In the villages which covered the country they do not seem to have existed at all except in the humble form of *nymphaea* and *sacella* attached to this or that great villa, e.g. the temple of Nodens at Lydney, Gloucester, and the little *nymphaeum* lately identified within the ringwork of Chanctonbury in Sussex²; but as the villages could not rise to the ownership of *fora*³ it is the less remarkable that they did not build temples. The *circus* which served them for the one purpose probably served them for the other also, officially at any rate. It will not suffice to urge that the temples once existed, but have been destroyed. The 250 years of Roman paganism here were precisely the years of Rome's most efficient building, and it is incredible that, had she built here anything at all approaching the temples of Italy, so few traces of them should be forthcoming.⁴ If then the official religion made so poor a display, is it likely that the struggling and persecuted faith of Christ could advertise itself in what we should call 'churches'?

Yet indubitably there were Christians—a few—here in the third century. If so, there were also *ecclesiae* in the

¹ Tacitus, *Agricola* 21.

² *Sussex Arch. Collections*, liii (1910), pp. 131-7.

³ See above, ch. ix.

⁴ Three temples were disclosed in the excavation of Silchester, of which one had a *cella* 24 ft. by 21 ft., another 13 ft. by 11 ft. See plans in Haverfield, *Romanization of Britain*, 1912, p. 31. The third was circular and larger. In *Archaeologia*, lxiv (1912-13), p. 449, is a plan of a round temple at Caerwent. Another at Caerwent had a *cella* 20 ft. square, with an apse 8 ft. across

the gorge. At Corstopitum (Corbridge) also was a building which may have been a temple. All that remains of any temple at Bath, the pleasure-city of the province, is the great head of Sol, which probably decorated his fane. The largest known rectangular temple in the island is that lately found at Uriconium (Wroxeter). Its *cella* was 25 ft. by 20 ft. and it differed from the others in standing within 'a cloistered *temenos*,' 93 ft. by 55 ft. See *Reports of Research Committee*, Lond. Soc. *Antiqs.* 1913-14.

sense of 'congregations,' and therefore also *ecclesiae* in the sense of 'places of meeting.' It does not follow that there were *ecclesiae* in the sense of structural 'churches,' and it is very unlikely that there were. There is no explicit mention of them, no trace of them, and no reason to think that the Romanised Briton, seeing that he was still a Celt, would require them. *Ecclesia* to him meant only the place of meeting for Christian ritual. In that sense he learnt to use the word and took it with him (*eglwys*) when later he withdrew before the Saxon into Wales. If he followed the example of the first Christians in Rome, whose first 'churches' were in the tombs of the catacombs, he would make his meeting-place where he buried his dead; and as this had likewise been the way of his forefathers in pagan times, it is the more probable that he did so. Further, as his forefathers had from immemorial time laid their dead in barrows, presumably he did the same. So his *ecclesia* (*eglwys*) must have been a barrow—the circular mound or the ring-work which still marked the graves of his dead, because he had never known any other way of marking¹ them. The evidence shows that this was actually the case in Wales in days when Christianity was no longer subject to persecution.²

After 311 things in Britain were different, for Constantine had given to the Christians liberty to follow their creed without molestation, and in effect Christianity became then and there the official creed of the province.

¹ It seems to be commonly assumed that Christianity at once swept away all the accessories of pagan burial. The thing is unthinkable, nor can there be cited any case where such a line of action was crowned with success. Christianity would assuredly have failed had it taken such a line, and it would have deserved to fail. There is no destroying at one blow the burial-customs of a people when they have any worth calling so, least of all those of the Celts.

² If *ecclesia* be taken, as archaeology suggests that it should be taken, not to have yet developed the sense of 'structural church,' all difficulty disappears from a number of statements, as for example that in *Menologia Graeca*, 16th March (cited in *Mon. Hist. Brit.* i, p. cii), of Aristobulus, one of the Seventy sent by St. Paul, *ἐκκλησίαν συστησάμενος καὶ πρεσβυτέρους*

καὶ διακόνους ἐν αὐτῇ καταστήσας, κ.τ.λ., and of St. Peter *ἐκκλησίας τε συστησάμενος ἐπισκόπους τε καὶ πρεσβυτέρους καὶ διακόνους χειροτονήσας, κ.τ.λ.* The word *ἐκκλησία* here probably has the same sense as in *N.T.* ('The Church which is in Ephesus,' etc.). There is no evidence whatever to support e.g. Milman's imaginary picture (*Hist. Lat. Christianity*, ii, 227) of a Roman Britain in which 'churches and monasteries existed in considerable numbers.' So Baring-Gould in *Arch. Cambr.* 5th Ser. xvii, 273; 'So far no evidence has been produced of any churches erected by the Britons themselves of stone or brick.' The Aristobulus of the above citation has been identified with the Arwystli Hên of Welsh tradition, Bran's spiritual instructor, and with the person mentioned in St. Paul's *Ep. to Romans*, xvi, 10. See Williams, *Eccles. Antiqs. of the Cymry*, p. 57.

Then at last there might be built structural churches, for the upper class of converts would not relish the rigours of worship *sub divo* in this climate. These of the upper class would be largely non-Celtic,¹ if not actually Italian. Just about the same period the Christians of Rome also set the fashion for building such edifices,² and began gradually to evolve the peculiar form of church styled the basilican.³ This too would find its way to Britain, but slowly, for distances were great and communications slow. But by the time the *basilica* reached him, the Romano-Briton had already become accustomed to speaking of any structural church as *ecclesia*, for he never adopted the new name (*basilica*).⁴ More than that, he never adopted the type either. He went on, as in Wales he still goes on, building *ecclesiae* of the type he had first known—the type still to be seen in the Chapel of St. Agnes in the Catacombs—a mere rectangular box.⁵

Bede, writing of the altered state of things, makes a marked distinction between these two types of structure. The persecutions over, the Christians in Britain, he writes, 'repaired their *ecclesiae*, which had been levelled to the ground; they founded and built and completed *basilicae* to the blessed martyrs.'⁶ The difference in the terminology is proof of Bede's veracity: there had heretofore been no basilican churches in Britain, but *ecclesiae* only; but after the declaration of religious tolerance the British Christians, drawn more closely into the Roman organisation, followed

¹ The monumental proofs of the prevalence of Christianity in Britain in the fourth century are almost exclusively in forms which bespeak them the property of the upper and wealthier class, seals and rings bearing the Christian monogram, and tessellated pavements which reproduce it. See Romilly Allen, *Mont. Hist.* pp. 12-19, 20-31. Newell (*Hist. Welsb Church*, p. 21) thinks differently in regard to Wales, where, he says, the evidence shows that early Christianity 'lived apart from the patronage of wealthy Roman residents.'

² 'Church-building, as we understand it, did not begin in Rome until the fourth century' (Ditchfield, *English Village*).

³ On the lack of any uniform plan in the earlier Christian churches, see Bingham, *Christ. Antiqs.* VIII, iii. Constantine's original church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem was circular (Eusebius, Walafrid

Strabo): but the same emperor built an octagonal church at Antioch and a cruciform church (of the Twelve Apostles) at Constantinople. Others again were square (*forma quadrata*, Sincerus in *Thesaur. Eccles. s.v. vabs*), and were oddly styled *δρρυμκά*.

⁴ Its appearance occasionally in Ireland (*basleg*) is artificial only.

⁵ William of Malmesbury (c. 1125), speaking of the well-known basilican church at Deerhurst near Tewkesbury, calls it *antiquitatis inane simulacrum*, 'a meaningless piece of ancient symbolism.' Did he mean that it was a style of building which was exotic in England? (*Gesta Pontif.* ii, 76).

⁶ *H.E.* I, viii, § 22, *renovant ecclesias usque ad solum destructas; basilicas sanctorum martyrum fundant, construunt, perficiunt.*

so far as might be the new Roman fashion and built *basilicae*. There was one at Silchester, believed to date c. 350. Bede does not say that every church built in Roman Britain after 311 was a *basilica*, nor is it likely that all were such: even the building erected over the spot where St. Albanus died he calls only an *ecclesia*, albeit it was 'of admirable workmanship and full worthy of the martyred saint.'¹ Basilican churches would be found only in some of the wealthier and more populous cities, and only there too is it likely that there had been many martyrdoms.

Bede uses the term *basilica* twice again, and in both cases of churches built by the Roman Paulinus.² He never applies it to any church built by the Scotie missionaries or their disciples, although some of these were of considerable size, as for example that of Aedilburga at Faremoutier.³ All these he calls *ecclesiae*. Clearly the word *basilica* has reference solely to the plan of the building, but not to the size or the material: Paulinus' *basilica* at Campodonum is of wood, but Ninian's stone church at Whithorn is *ecclesia*. If elsewhere Bede calls the *basilica* at York by the term *ecclesia*,⁴ this is not incorrect, for every *basilica* was an *ecclesia*, though not every *ecclesia* was a *basilica*.

None of Augustine's churches at Canterbury is called a *basilica*. All are *ecclesiae*, as also the cathedral churches built by his colleagues at London⁵ and Rochester.⁶ Yet in the case of the church of SS. Peter and Paul, now St. Augustine's, he had an entirely free hand, and as excavations have proved, the church as first completed was actually a *basilica*; and why Bede should style it *ecclesia*⁷ is not clear. Is it possible that Augustine had not designed it so ambitiously?⁸ He began it in 601, but died in 604, and the building was only completed under his successor Laurentius in 613; and even so it was not a large building. It is not easy to understand the length of time occupied unless there were some very material alterations in the design. But Bede, who never left his home on the Wear, had no personal knowledge of Canterbury, and could not

¹ *H.E.* I, vii, § 20.

² Below, p. 218.

³ *H.E.* II, viii, § 174.

⁴ *ibid.* II, xiv, § 133.

⁵ *ibid.* II, iii, § 95.

⁶ *ibid. loc. cit.*

⁷ *ibid.* I, xxxiii, § 79: II, iii, § 96.

⁸ Prof. Hamilton Thompson (*Ground-plan of the English Parish Church*, p. 15) takes this view. The complete history of the site is to be found in *Archaeologia* lxxvii (1927), pp. 201-218.

always be infallible when relying upon the information of others.

King Alfred, in translating the *History* of Orosius, uses *cirice* for both *ecclesia* and *basilica* indifferently. So does Bede's Saxon Translator, and when met with the need of distinguishing between the two, as in the case of the earlier *ecclesia* and the later *basilica* at York, calls the former *cirice*, the latter merely *maran cirican*, 'a bigger church.' A Saxon of Scotie bias, he saw no difference save in point of size between the one and the other. As the Welsh used *eglwys* for any sort of church, so the Saxon used *cirice*, and just as the Welsh use of *eglwys* must have been established before the word *basilica* was introduced into Britain in the fourth century, so the Saxon use of *cirice* must have been established before Paulinus re-introduced the basilican type, i.e. before A.D. 627.

Within the walls of Canterbury Augustine 'recovered' a church which he understood to have been built in the old days of Roman Christianity, and reconsecrated it as Christ Church. This is the only reliable mention of a structural church of that date in Britain. It lay beneath the nave of the present cathedral, a small basilican building with short nave, side aisles, western apse, and probably an eastern *narthex* flanked by square towers. King Ethelbert had perhaps made some secular use of it: his 'temple' appears to have been outside the walls (at St. Pancras').¹ Beyond St. Pancras', beside the same Roman road leading to Richborough, lay St. Martin's. Both these are reputed to have been Roman buildings, but there is no proof that either was built to be a church, and both had eastern apses. As the Christians of the fourth century seem to have preferred the western apse,² it would seem that both buildings had been converted from some secular use. At any rate it is clear that the Jute had inherited a considerable number of Roman buildings. He had apparently stepped straight into the leavings of the Romans' civilisation, and they were more numerous here in the south-eastern corner of Britain than elsewhere. The Jute himself was far less of a savage than was the Angle or the Saxon, and king Ethelbert was

¹ Thorn's *Chronicle*. It was a basilican building, and the king had an *idolum* in its south aisle. Bede does not mention it.

² According to Dr. Haverfield (in *Encycl. Britann.*) this was the fashion until *circa* 420, that is, so long as Britain was Roman.

actually married to a Christian queen who was guaranteed religious liberty, brought with her from Gaul her own confessor Luidhard, and used as her private chapel a building which stood where is now the church of St. Martin. Then, as always, culture stood higher in this quarter than elsewhere in the island, and ravage, whether of Pict or of Saxon, did less damage. The Roman tradition must have lingered as stubbornly here as anywhere: to this day two out of four of the great Roman cities of the area are still great, and Richborough failed only when the sea failed it. The fact must have weighed with pope Gregory when he directed Augustine to make his landing here in Kent.

It is at least probable¹ that the building excavated at Silchester was verily a Christian church. Like the original of Christ Church in Canterbury it was of basilican plan with a western apse and entrance through a *narthex* on the eastern side. The overall measurements were about 42 ft. by 27 ft.; nave and apse together measured 30 ft. by 10 ft.; the nave was 20 ft. by 10 ft. and the two aisles were but 5 ft. wide. It was therefore very small. It is strange that, if Christianity was in the fourth century so general and so vigorous in Britain as it is commonly alleged to have been, there should be so few certain traces of its buildings.

Silchester was a large city. Its walls enclose an area of 100 acres, whereas those of Caerwent and Caerleon—'the city of palaces,' as Giraldus Cambrensis called it—extended over fifty acres only, and those of Eboracum, the administrative capital of the whole of Britannia Romana, embraced no more than 52 acres.

If this small building contented so large a community in the more progressive part of the province in the days when Christianity was triumphant, of what fashion would be any 'churches' in the smaller towns and in the remoter villages? Of what fashion would be any *ecclesiae* which existed in Britain prior to the days of Constantine?

On this point we have no evidence of any sort save the vague statements of Christian apologists and such remarks as that of Bede, that all the *ecclesiae* had been 'levelled with the ground,'² in the days of Diocletian's persecution.

¹ But Dr. Haverfield cautions us that 'there is no direct proof either of the date of the building or of its purpose.'

² *Ad solum usque destructas*, H.E. I, viii, § 22.

This phrase tells us nothing, for it might apply just as well to a barrow or a stone circle, as to any building of wood or of stone. If, as Bede says, structural churches were still unusual with the Britons of Ninian's time (c. 400), we may reasonably believe that they were at least as unusual more than a century earlier; and that being so, we must infer that the Romano-British Christians of the third and fourth centuries as a rule had no 'churches' at all, but meeting-places only. We know that this was the case in Ireland and in Wales in the fifth century, and that the Welsh Christians of that century were of the very same race as those of whom Bede was speaking. We can only suppose, in default of evidence to the contrary, that in matters of religion they did very much as their fathers had done. If so, the *ecclesiae* of pre-Constantinian Christianity in Britain must have been barrows, not buildings, and the meaning of *eglwys* at any time between the second and the fifth centuries—probably very much later—must have been simply this. As a barrow might be of any fashion, mound or disc or cromlech, there would therefore be nothing strange in finding the name of *eglwys* attaching to such monuments, precisely as happens in the Saxon areas with the term 'kirk' or 'church.' Thus such a name as *Hên Eglwys* or *Eglwys y Gwyddel* (ch. xx) is exactly parallel with that of Sunkenkirk, Old Kirk, or The Kirk at Kirkby Ireleth (ch. xxiv).

What became of the *fana* of paganism when Christianity triumphed? The new faith received no immediate license to persecute in its own turn, and there can hardly have been any systematic campaign of destruction directed against the old order.¹ Very likely some Roman *fana* were converted into Christian churches,² as had happened in Rome, but we have no positive evidence of it, and if true, it would apply only to the towns. The leaders of the new faith might model their procedure upon that of their fellows in Rome and aspire to basilican churches, but the generality of the flock would be Romanised Celts, *pagani*, who cared nothing at all about structural temples. Quite

¹ Paganism was only proscribed at last by Theodosius, c. 390, but it does not follow that even then all pagan *fana* were actually destroyed.

² This is said to have been done by order of the sons of Constantine.

possibly they actually used for Christian worship some of those moots—*circi* and circles—wherein they had erstwhile sacrificed to Jupiter. Such things lay ready to hand, and as they had never been used as places of interment, they might easily be purified and reconsecrated. If such a change really occurred—and Gregory a little later recommended to Mellitus precisely such a change—it would at once explain the persistent tradition that many of the stone circles were places not merely of worship, but specifically of Christian worship.

The Saxons as a whole, owing their conversion to Scotie missionaries, took the Scotie attitude as regards the structural church, and made small account of it. When at last they were brought over to the Roman attitude and began to build churches, the ruins of Roman buildings provided them with both models and materials. But for almost 200 years after the Romans left there were no churches at all built in England, and for the next two hundred years thereafter such as were built were almost all of wood.

Ninian failed in Strathclyde because he sought to impose Roman Christianity upon a Celtic people. His failure was hastened by the southward thrust of the still pagan Picts. If Gildas found it well to migrate from Alclwyd to Glastonbury, it was because Alclwyd was no longer safe from Pictish attack, whereas Glastonbury was still remote from the vanguard of the advancing Saxons. If Christianity maintained itself at all in Galloway, its existence was most precarious. Further to the north, beyond the Antonine Wall, it had never extended. Caledonia proper was still, and always had been, pagan without qualification. The dominant race there were the Picts, and the Picts were Brythonic, kinsmen of the Belgae of southern Britain, but belonging to a later wave of immigration.

One cause of the southward movement of the Picts was the invasion of the western sea-board of Caledonia—Dalriada—by tribes from the north of Ireland. Amongst these were the Scoti, who, coming from the Irish Dalriada, carved out for themselves a new kingdom of the same name in Argyllshire,¹ and in the long run imposed upon

¹ Their capital fortress was traditionally destroyed by Angus MacFergus, king of the *dun* of Dunadd, which was taken and the Picts, as early as 736 (*Annals of Tighe-*

the whole country their own name. The general movement of these tribes was to the north and east, and they reached as far as the Orkneys. The traditional date for the commencement of their invasions is 498. To make room for the new-comers, the Picts moved eastward and southward. To this day the place-names of eastern Scotland are mainly Pictish, whereas those of the western seaboard and the isles are Goidelic. Names of saints are comparatively few upon the eastern part of the map; the western part bristles with such names, and the saints in question are almost wholly Irish. Most famous and most frequent upon the list, though not the earliest in date, is that of St. Columba.¹

Columba was a saint in the Celtic sense of that term: he was a younger son of royalty² (O'Donnell), a convert who broke many of the Ten Commandments and founded many 'churches.' He left Ireland because he had to do so. He came to the new Dalriada because, amongst other reasons, the inhabitants were of his kindred. He had been bidden not settle within sight of Ireland, so he pushed on as far as Hy.³ The year was 563.⁴

From this Scotie settlement on Iona—Icolumkille⁵—sprang the whole Christianity of northern Britain for the next 500 years. From the twelfth century onward Latin Christianity began to usurp the field. Icolumkille, after being repeatedly sacked and burned by the Norsemen, was itself refounded as a Benedictine monastery in 1203, just as Whithorn had been refounded as Premonstratensian

nach). The ruins have lately been excavated with illuminating results (*Proc. S.A.S.* lii, 292, *sqq.*). The finds were such as might easily have been put many centuries too early in time, but for their including one or two which bespoke Christianity. Of these one was a small disc of slate lettered in Irish minuscules with the legend IN NOMINE.

¹ Other missionaries already in the field were SS. Kentigern, Finbar, Drostan, Comgall, Cainnech, and Molaise, whose activities extended from Galloway to Sutherlandshire. See Archibald Scott, *The Pictish Nation*, *passim*.

² He was great-great-grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, a king of All Ireland in the fourth century. He was therefore a Brython. Through his grandmother he was 'closely connected with the kings of the Scottish Dalriada.' This explains both why

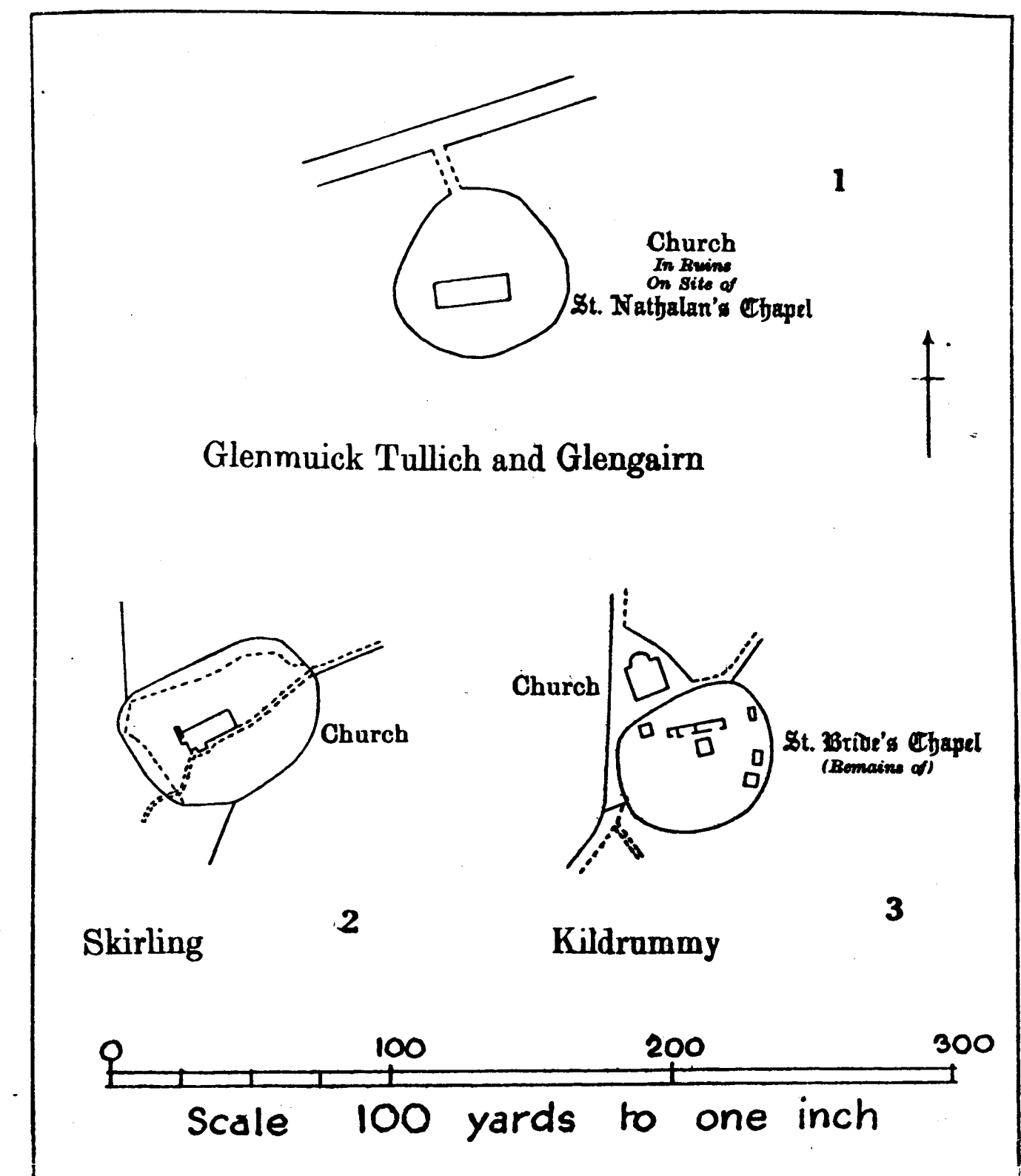
he settled in Hy, and why he at once addressed himself to the Brythonic king Brude Macmailhon (554-584) of the Picts. Stokes, *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, cc. v, vi; Reeves, *Adamnan*, p. 151.

³ The modern name Iona is said to be due to a misreading.

⁴ Bede puts it in 565.

⁵ The name recurs on many other sites in the Western Highlands and in the Isles (in Skye, Mull, Tiree, Islay, Lewes, and Oronsay). Petrie believed it to have been extended to all settlements founded from the original in Hy, to the traditional number of 300. Of these Warren (*Celtic Liturgy*) pronounces 53 to be historical. Kilcolumkille and Claodh-Columkille, however, need imply no more than a graveyard containing, or claiming to contain, relics of the saint.

(before 1153) in the time of king David I. But the wild coasts which had attracted the Irish pioneers¹ made less appeal to the Latin monks of a later age, who mostly left them alone. The world at large has followed suit, or if it has interfered at all, interfered usually to demolish. But



CIRCULAR CHURCHYARDS, SCOTLAND

(From the Ordnance Map, by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office).

the monuments of St. Columba and of his missionary disciples are still strewn broadcast from Clydemouth to the Orkneys.

¹ Amongst them were St. Donan who settled in Eigg, St. Brendan in Seil, St. Blaen in Bute, St. Molaise in Arran, and St. Maelrubha in Skye. The settlements on the east coast were made partly direct from Iona

by way of Perth and Aberdeen, partly from Lindisfarne, itself a daughter of Iona, northward by way of Old Melrose, Coldingham, etc.

In all external points the early monastic settlements of Scotland were like those of Ireland. Each had its small cluster of bee-hive cells grouped about one or more tiny rectangular oratories, the whole ringed by a circular *cashel*.¹ Remains of all these features are still traceable.² Later Roman reorganisations substituted the rectangle for the circle, but not so completely as to obliterate the latter. Enough remains to leave little doubt that the first settlement on Iona was another Inismurray,³ and that the multitude of her daughter-foundations were of the same plan as was the parent settlement. 'The monastery established by St. Columba was of the usual Irish type. Its buildings were like St. Brigid's at Kildare, of wattles and clay, or at best of oak planks . . . The monastery was still in the same state even when more than a century old, for Adamnan tells of the toil he and his brother monks endured bringing home trees to repair their wooden huts.'⁴ The same authority 'repeatedly mentions the church with its *exedra*, or side-chamber, and terms it *oratorium*, which shows that it was a *duirthach*, or oaken building.'⁵ St. Columba merely transplanted to new soil Irish monastic Christianity.

'Kirk Stones of Stroupster' is the name of a curious group of remains near Wick in Caithness, where the ruins of four diminutive quadrangular buildings with curiously long and narrow entrance-ways stand within the area of a roughly circular stone dyke (about 50 yards by 30 yards in diameter) upon a low green mound, the whole surrounded by a fosse. The buildings, which are thought to have once been roofed in beehive fashion, revealed traces of hearths, a quantity of shells, and—so it is said—fragments of blue-glazed pottery; and some of them showed also traces of something like the stone bench running along the side walls as seen in 'St. Molaise's House' at Inismurray (ch. xviii) and

¹ Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, i, pp. 93 sqq.

² At Inch Columkille in Skye, at Eileanna-Naoimh in Garveloch, at the Brough of Deerness in Orkney, and elsewhere.

³ W. G. Collingwood speaks (*Antiquary*, 1907, p. 175) of 'a large flat space, strongly ramparted . . . possibly representing Columba's *rath* in Iona.' See also Stokes, *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, pp. 116-8.

By contrast the *cashel* at Columkille in Skye is given as 'about 20 yards by 14 yards only' (Anderson, op. cit. p. 94). At Eileanna-Naoimh the insulated site rendered needless any *cashel*, as it did on Skellig Michael.

⁴ Stokes, op. cit. p. 116, citing Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 195.

⁵ Skene, *Celtic Scotland* (1887), ii, 95.

in other early Irish oratories. They are not set east and west. Two of them at any rate must have been long occupied, for they proved to have had two or three successive floors.¹ The whole description, not less than the name of 'Kirk Stones,' is strongly suggestive of a Scotie Christian settlement.

The word *rath*, now obsolete in Gaelic,² was in use as late as 1380, when a Court of Regality was held 'apud le standand stanes de la Rath de Kingussie.'³ Dr. Christison says that the evidence for its use in the Irish sense in Scottish place-names is 'exceedingly meagre.'⁴ There are, however, a number of such place-names—Rathen near Deer in Aberdeenshire, Rathillet in Fife, Ratho in Edinburghshire, Rathven in Banff, and Rattray in Perthshire—all in the Brythonic area of Scotland; and with Rathen, Rathven, and Rattray are associated many an-historic remains and specifically many 'druidical' circles. There is also a Rathmuriel—Rath of St. Muriel⁵—likewise in Brythonic Aberdeenshire. Such association of the names of saints with earthworks is, says Mackinlay, rare in Scotland, citing two other instances, namely, St. Bride's Ring on Kingennie Hill, Monifieth, Forfar,⁶ and Caerwinning—St. Wynnin's *Caer*—in Ayrshire.⁷ St. Bride's Ring is described as a ruined circular fort with walls 7 feet thick, built of undressed stone, with an inner diameter of 54½ feet. The name of St. Bride, thinks Mackinlay, has been transferred to this spot from a chapel dedicated to her in the vicinity.⁸ It may quite well have been the other way about.⁹ The fort at Caerwinning appears to have been a typical three-ringed Celtic *dun*,¹⁰ like that at Eglwys

¹ *Proc. S.A.S.* 1916. In the *Book of Arran* (Glasgow, 1910), pp. 195-213, J. A. Balfour describes a group of ruins on the Leaca Bhreac near Kilpatrick in Arran, overlooking Kilbrannan Sound, and identifies it with the traditional settlement of St. Brandan at Aileach (Culbrandon). It is a dubious case: the area is unduly large (2½ acres) for such a settlement *circa* 680, and the plan has no approach to circularity, while the wall is very feeble. An adjacent hill, however, bears the name of Torr an Daimh, 'Church Hill.' Abutting upon the wall of the enclosure are the ruins of what seems to have been a formidable *broch*, with an interior diameter of 55 feet.

² Mackinlay, *Pre-Reformation Church*, p. 388.

³ Gomme, *Primitive Folkmoos*, p. 190: *Archaeologia*, xx, 200.

⁴ *Early Fortifications of Scotland*, p. 317.

⁵ Mackinlay, op. cit. p. 387.

⁶ Mackinlay, op. cit. p. 416.

⁷ *ibid.* p. 388.

⁸ The next parish is Panbride, which is explained as Llan-Bride. There is another Llanbride in Elginshire.

⁹ Tradition asserts that there was a settlement of Culdees here (Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*).

¹⁰ *New Statistical Account, Ayrshire*, p. 219. The same saint has left his name in Kilwinning also, likewise in Ayrshire.

Cymmin (ch. xix); whereas Carbuddo, otherwise Kirk-buddo,¹ in Forfar—the *Caer* of St. Buite—has reference to the ruins of a Roman *castrum*,² and Carluke in Lanark was anciently Eglismalescoc.³ The only explanation of the change of *eglis* to *caer* must be that here too the *ecclesia* was surrounded by earthworks so formidable as to suggest a veritable *caer*. That this might be so is shown by the case of Carmichael in the same county: in the twelfth century the place was called Plan-Michael, 'St. Michael's Llan.'⁴ Even in the twelfth century Irish saints were still coming over to Scotland and fortifying each his oratory with 'a *vallum* after the manner of the Irish *rath*.'⁵

One of the earliest Christian foundations in eastern Scotland was that of St. Drostan at Old Deer in Buchan, on the borders of the shires of Elgin and Aberdeen. This settlement retained its original Celtic character as late as the accession of David I (1124),⁶ but even so late other Irish missionary-saints were still founding new houses of the same Scotie type.⁷ This is a fact to be borne in mind in attempting to determine the age of ecclesiastical remains in Scotland, as is also the fact that the *regula Romana* had in that country a free hand for at most 400 years.⁸

Columba brought with him other things than mere externalities: he brought the immemorial Celtic belief that there could be no consecration without burial. His first act on proceeding to occupy his new home in Hy was to bury one of his own followers, the monk Odhrain

¹ cf. Cardonell and Kirkdonell, and other examples below, p. 293.

² Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, i, 135.

³ Johnston, *Place Names of Scotland*.

⁴ Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i, 159.

⁵ Mackinlay, p. 387.

⁶ *Book of Deer*. Old Deer lies in the very heart of that part of Aberdeenshire where 'druidical' remains are most abundant, including a number of circles of the 'Aberdeenshire' type.

⁷ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, ii, 97.

⁸ It is 350 years since the death of John Knox (1572), yet to this day the Roman Church remains unchanged and undisturbed amongst many of the northern glens. Things may well have moved as slowly there

before the Reformation, and purely Scotie settlements may have subsisted far later than is usually supposed. King Nectan of the Picts, when he requested bishop Ceolfrid to assist him in building churches 'after the Roman manner' which should be dedicated to St. Peter (710), was only 'conforming' to the *regula Romana* in the prime matters of the date of Easter and the form of the tonsure. This involved 'the expulsion of the family of Hy (the Columban monks)' from all Pictland (Tighernach, *Chron.* 717), and for a time the Christianity of Pictland seems to have been represented mainly by the solitary activities of the Culdees, who were rather Scotie than Roman. It was not until the eleventh century that the Roman influence came to be effectively felt. See Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, ii, ch. vi.

(Oran), whose chapel still stands beside St. Columba's larger (and later) church. Here is the ugly story as retold by Professor Haddon.¹ Arrived in Hy:

'Columkille said then to his people, "It would be well for us that our roots should pass into the earth here." And he said to them, "It is permitted to you that some of you go under the earth of this island to consecrate it." Odhrain rose quickly and thus spoke: "If you accept me," said he, "I am ready for that." "O Odhrain," said Columkille, "you shall receive the reward of this. No request shall be granted to any one at my tomb unless he first ask of thee." Odhrain then *went to heaven*. He (Columkille) founded the Church of Hy then.'

Even in England at the present day the parishioners will frequently insist that they shall be buried within the old garth of their parish, be it never so crowded, each stubbornly refusing to be the first to be laid in any new annexe thereto; and if they can be induced to give their reason, it lies in their conviction that 'the Devil gets the first person' buried in the newly consecrated ground.² There can be little doubt that this attitude arises from a dim memory of the human sacrifices whereby the first 'churches' were hallowed, and the same memory explains also the clear distinction drawn by the peasant mind between the formal 'consecration' of a new burial-ground and its actual 'hallowing' by the first interment. Of the former is made little or no account, of the latter very much.

This first Christian settlement at Hy was merely a circular burial-place surrounded by a ring of stones. There are many such scattered over the country, and in very many cases they still bear the name of this or that Irish saint. Sometimes it seems no building ever followed. Often there stands a tiny Celtic church, or the ruin thereof, within the circle. In not a few cases there are several

¹ Haddon, *The Study of Man* (1898), ch. xli; cf. Jamieson, *Hist. of the Culdees*, p. 20; Baring-Gould in *Arch. Cambr.* The satirical spirit of a later age gave to the story an amusing turn, for which see the note to Scott's poem of *Glenfinlas*. The chapel of St. Odhrain is still the oldest church in the island, though not the original building. It is possibly as old as the eleventh century. The burial-ground attached to it is called Reilig Oran, the Irish name transferred to Scotland. There is another Reilig Oran in Tiree. That in Iona is (or was) 'surrounded by a circle of

stones' (Murray's *Guide*): i.e. it was a sepulchral cromlech. But for the happy accident which has preserved its history, this would have been written down as one of the many 'druidical circles' of Scotland. Skene mentions (*Celtic Scotland*, ii, p. 89) 'a small green hillock surmounted by a circle of stones,' adding that 'it is now called Sithean Mor, but the circle of stones has long since disappeared.'

² This was the confessed reason given by an old man of Wybunbury in Cheshire, some few years ago. The prejudice appears to be specially powerful in Somersetshire.

such buildings within the one precinct.¹ These details may vary, but not so the *limes*. That is always circular.

The remains of the monastery of St. Maelrubha on Innismaree, Loch Maree, were described² in 1775 as 'a circular dike of stones with a regular narrow entrance. The inner part has been used for ages as a burial-ground, and is still so used.' A desecrated burial-ground in Coll, on Kilbride farm, is 'flat and rather spacious, of somewhat circular shape,'³ remains of the enclosing wall still showing, though the site has been several times under tillage. Kilmaline, the burial-ground of Salen in Mull, three miles from the village, is a circular enclosure⁴ within a rude wall dry-built of stones collected from the moorland about. There is another called Kilfinichen⁵ on Loch Scridain, and a third in Ulva.⁶ That of St. Kilda in the outermost Hebrides was in 1926 a circular mound overgrown with ragged grass, showing never a monument, nor any trace of a church.⁷ The graveyard surrounding the old church of Dipple, parish of Speymouth, Elgin, is circular and revetted, the area flush with the top of the revetment. 'It used to be the custom [at Dipple] to carry the corpse sunwise round the churchyard before interment.'⁸ The churchyard of Fodderty, Strathpeffer, Ross-shire, is still partially circular and greatly mounded up. That of Kirkton near Hawick, in Roxburghshire, was perfectly circular until enlarged in 1897. So was that of Linton in the same county. So is, and always has been, that of Skirling in Peeblesshire. James Hogg mentions⁹ the remains of the chapel of St. Lawrence at Chapelhope, 'in a small circular

¹ In a burial-ground at Howmore in S. Uist there are five such buildings; in another at Kilbar in Barra there are four. See T. S. Muir, *Eccles. Notes*, p. 50. So definitely circular is the *limes* in each case that he was content to show each by a compass-drawn circle.

² Pennant, *Tour in Scotland*, ii, 330.

³ Mackinlay, p. 8.

⁴ The circle is now broken by an angular annexe on the south side. Within the circle 'are the foundations of a small chapel.' So T. S. Muir (*Ecclesiological Notes*, p. 25), who calls the spot Killinaline.

⁵ T. S. Muir (op. cit. p. 26) found here 'no traces' of any building.

⁶ The traditional burial places of 'Lord Ullin's daughter' and her lover.

⁷ The kirk, a modern building, is at the opposite end of the village, entirely separate from the burial-ground.

⁸ Private letter of John Geddie, Edinburgh. T. F. Thistleton Dyer (*Domestic Folklore*, pp. 61-62) mentions a similar practice as formerly prevailing in the north of England, for 'the dead maun aye go wi' the sun'; and cites Pennant as stating that 'when a corpse was carried to the churchyard, . . . great care was always taken that it should be carried the whole distance on the right-hand side of the road.' A woodcut on the title-page of Weever's *Ancient Funeral Monuments* (1631) shows a funeral cortège entering a church with a sun-wise turn.

⁹ *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*, ch. ii.

enclosure on the west side of the burn.' Chapelhope, near St. Mary's Loch, is usually called Henderland (in Megget, Peeblesshire). Its garth is very small (diam. 25 yards), belted with an unmistakable vallum.¹ Circular in plan and mounded up to a great height is the churchyard of Kildrummy (St. Brigit), near Alford. On the other hand that of Tullich, near Ballater, though almost exactly circular, shows no mound. This 'church' was founded by St. Nathalan (*obiit* 678), and from it has come a long series of carven memorial stones, the oldest a remarkable monolith of Pictish type bearing the symbols known as the 'spectacles,' 'elephant,' and 'mirror.'²

The Knowe of Saverough, in the dunes half a mile from Birsay in the Orkneys, provides a Scottish parallel to the case of Warren in South Wales (ch. xx). Here was a mound with diameter of 168 ft. and height of 14-16 ft., larger in area than that at Warren, but in proportions much the same. It was filled with interments of all ages and of both sexes, the bodies laid in cists made of flat stones from the adjacent beach. The skulls show that they belonged to those who inhabited the Orkneys at a date prior to the Norse invasion at the close of the ninth century. There was no grave-furniture with the bodies, save in one case, where was found in the cist an urn 5 inches high. Close by were the traces of a building with all the usual indications of a dwelling-place, several querns, a double-edged weaving-comb, implements of bone and of iron, ashes, and the refuse of food; and close beside, in a cist of its own, was found—with no other deposit whatever—the famous Bell of Birsay.³

Dr. Anderson is satisfied that the bell—such bells were held in peculiar veneration by the Celtic Christians—was buried there as a holy relic for its greater security at the time of the Norse invasion. The spot was a *locus consecratus* and a barrow,⁴ and the bell being without question a Christian relic, the inference is that the barrow was a

¹ Information of Ian C. Hannah.

² *Dee-Side Field* (Aberdeen, 1922), pp. 16-18. St. Nathalan was himself buried here.

³ *Proc. S.A.S.* v, 10: Anderson, *Scotland in Early Christian Times*, p. 167. The bell is now in the museum of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries in Edinburgh.

⁴ cp. R. Fenton, writing of Llanbedr in Anglesey; 'In the flat below there is a circular knoll, encompassed by an *agger* such as encloses places set apart for religious ceremonies, which is called Bryn y Clychau, i.e. Hill of the Bells' (*Cambr. Arch. Assoc.* 1917, p. 265). The description is that of a primitive *llan*.

Christian graveyard. Dr. Anderson himself remarked that, when the Norsemen became Christians, a church—Christ's Kirk in Birsay—was built about half a mile away, as if in recognition of the fact that the spot was associated with Christianity.¹

Here then is another of the very earliest Christian burial-grounds, like that of Warren, Pemb. Both are circular flat-topped barrows; and just as at Warren we find the pagan cup-mark side by side with the Christian wheeled-cross, so at Birsay we have the pagan urn in the same barrow with the Christian bell. The Knowe of Saverough is, however, in point of evolution later than the barrow at Warren, for it was provided with a permanent structure to serve as the residence and oratory of a priest. We have no record of his name, but it would seem that he was the possessor of one of those much-prized bells, and fearing for its safety in some time of crisis, he buried it in the holiest sanctuary he knew of, the graveyard of his flock, which kept it safe for a thousand years.

There are in Scotland, and southward far into Northumbria, many isolated hills to which attach names such as Kirk Hill and Old Kirk. They are mostly of no great elevation, but usually markedly circular, and were it not that their name of 'kirk' has glamoured the judgment of those who see them, it would long since have been remarked that each is just the site for a barrow. Each is a barrow, or at least carries or has carried a barrow, and their name proclaims the fact. Sometimes the name goes back to Gaelic times: Knockan-he-glish, parish of Drymen, Stirlingshire, and Knoc-na-eaglais, near Aberfeldy in Perthshire, both preserve the word *ecclesia*,² and each is a barrow. There are cairns in Scotland to which still cling the names of saints reputed, and possibly correctly reputed, to be buried beneath them, like St. Donan's Cairn in Eigg and that of St. Duthace at Tain.³ Mitchell recalls the 'cairn erected in the presence of St. Columba

over the grave of the decrepit old chief of the Geona cohort by his companions who brought him to Skye to be baptised.'¹

The ruined church of St. Blane, Kingarth, Bute, stands upon a huge flat-topped cairn 500 ft. in circumference, still showing the remains of an encircling stone revetment.² At the opposite side of Scotland, at Strathdon near Alford in Aberdeenshire, at the confluence of the Nochtly with the Don, is a conical hill—the Dun of Nochtly—some 60 ft. high, flat-topped, and about 170 ft. in diameter. It was once girt by a ditch some 25 ft. wide, and within were to be found foundations of huts. The local tradition is that here once stood the old church of the district.³ The churchyard of Kennethmont in Garioch is set upon 'an eminence similar to a mount.'⁴

Some fifty years ago it was decided to build upon a new site a new parish church at Hillswick, Mainland of Shetland, keeping the old site for use as a burial-ground; but this being already full of graves, it was trenched over and new soil added. In the course of trenching there was found under the foundations of the old church a 'Picts' House,'⁵ a circular wall of great stones (diam. 55-60 ft.), many of them weighing half a ton, with remains of a hearth and quantities of shells. The garth surrounding this building was, and still is, circular, and the facts point to this also having been a barrow, upon which had been set the customary early Scotie something which was at once dwelling-place and oratory.⁶ For obvious reasons it seldom happens that an old Christian site is so thoroughly upturned as this, else similar evidence would probably be multitudinous (plate ii, no. 2).

The same forms of grave-monuments are found in Scotland as in Wales and in Ireland, though the dolmen is rarer, the cromlech far commoner. Pillar-stones are very numerous. Commonest of all is the cairn. With each type are found associated the names of saints. A ruined

¹ As the existing church of Warren (Pemb.) is some half-mile away from the earlier graveyard (ch. xx). Theodore's *Penitential*, 47, seems to make provision for such changes in the sites of 'churches': *Ecclesiam licet poni in alium locum, si necessitas fuerit, et in loco altaris crux debet poni.*

² Mackinlay, *Pre-Reformation Church*, p. 66.

³ *Origines Paroch. Scot.* ii, 427. A Cairn-Iernan used to be pointed out in the parish of Killiernan (Killearnan) in Sutherlandshire.

¹ *The Past in the Present*, p. 89. The reference is to Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, i, 27.

² *Origines Paroch. Scot.* ii, 211.

³ Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*

⁴ Op. cit. s.v. Kennethmont.

⁵ All anhistoric monuments are so called in the Shetlands.

⁶ Information of Thos. Anderson of Laarsund. There appears to be no published report of the matter. The site seems to have been anciently an island in a loch now drained, and there is still traceable the paved causeway leading to it. A short distance to the west has been found and explored a so-called kitchen-midden.

dolmen 'close to the ancient burying-ground of Kilmichael in north-western Bute' is known as St. Michael's Grave, and is thought to preserve the name of Maccaille, a disciple of St. Patrick and a bishop, who died at the close of the fifth century. The remains of a cromlech in Banffshire are known as St. Brendan's Stones, and a neighbouring church is dedicated to the same saint. A grassy hillock in Iona, which once carried a cromlech, is called Cnoc-an-Aingel, 'The Barrow of the Archangel,' and round it at Michaelmas the islanders used to drive their horses. The names of SS. Ternan and Devenick are conjoined with the significant Banchory, and each place is notable for its 'druidical' circles. Tradition has it that on St. Columba's own grave in Iona was set as his monument the 'black stone' which had served him for a pillow. A sculptured pillar-stone at Cossins in Forfarshire, 7 ft. 9 ins. high, bears the name of an unknown Saint Orland (or Airland). It stands upon a 'sandy knoll,' presumably his barrow. Another in the parish of Leslie, Aberdeenshire, formerly surrounded by a small cairn, is called St. Ringan's (Ninian's) Stone. A third at Dalry, Kirkcudbright, 'once lay in the old church, still to be seen in the picturesque graveyard beyond the Ken.' It is called St. John's Chair, and the village of Dalry itself is known as St. John's Clachan. St. Wallach's Stone, now lying near the ancient burying-ground of Logie-Mar in Aberdeenshire, was at an earlier date built into the churchyard wall. At Fortingall, Perthshire, is a Clach-math-Luag, 'St. Moluag's Stone,' and at Portmaluag in Lismore is a pile of stones said to be the ruins of a church and known as St. Moluag's Seat or Cairn.¹ An eight-foot pillar-stone at Shandrick in Nigg is known as Clach-a-Charridh, 'The Stone of the Burial Ground,' and around it 'were for ages buried the Christian dead of the parish.'² Archibald Scott observes³ that the Scottish peasantry 'steadily insisted on burying their dead around the spots' identified with their earliest Christianity, all efforts of later Roman and post-Reformation clergy to the contrary notwithstanding, just as they continued until Stukeley's time to bury near the stone-circles. In Scotland,

¹ The above are all cited from Mackinlay, *Pre-Reformation Church*, who gives many other examples.

² Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*

³ *Pictish Nation* (1918), p. 88.

as in Wales and Ireland, the rituals of the older and the newer faiths were interblended. In a grave within the churchyard of Navidale (St. Ninian's) in Sutherlandshire 'were found a bronze knife, a flint implement, and the palmated antler of one of the extinct deer.'¹ From the site of a sometime chapel in Dalry came four urns containing human bones.² In and about the churchyard of Kildrummy have been found flint implements in such numbers as to give rise to the belief that it was the site of a prehistoric settlement.

In Scotland, as in Ireland, the usual practice was to lay the dead within rude cists built of slabs of stone, and this custom continued until very recent times. 'At Ness, in the Island of Lewis, till quite recently no one was buried in a wooden coffin. There was only one big coffin in connexion with every churchyard, which the people called 'The Chest of the Dead.' When the body was brought to the churchyard in this coffin, a coffin of stone [i.q. cist] was made, in which the body was placed.'³ It would seem that there is but one certain test of the creed of the dead, and that is the finding on or in the coffin or the grave some indisputable religious symbol; but as Holy Church did not countenance any kinds of accessory or ornament save in the case of those of high degree, and those of lesser status could ill afford them, there must in the vast majority of cases be nothing at all to distinguish the pagan from the Christian in death.

In the days of bishop Patrick of the Sudereys (tenth century) one Orlygr Hrappsson, his *protégé*, conceived the desire to go as a missionary to the pagan Norse of Iceland.⁴ Approving his desire the bishop gave him 'timber for building a church,'⁵ and also some 'consecrated earth to be laid under the corner-posts⁶ of the church' in lieu of

¹ *ibid.* p. 85.

² Lewis, *Topog. Dict.*

³ *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*, ii, p. lx. Wilson (*Prehist. Scotland*, p. 71) mentions the finding of numerous cists in recent years 'in the neighbourhood of the parish church of Cairnie, Aberdeenshire.'

⁴ *Islandinga Sögur (Landnáma Boc*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, Copenhagen, 1900) pp. 10, 11; Baring-Gould and Fisher, *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*, iv, 53.

⁵ *Kirkiu-við*. There is little or no timber in Iceland, though there is stone in plenty. So bishop Patrick did not consider stone to be the essential material for a church. This was in the tenth century. Still later (eleventh century) Olaf the Saint sent to Iceland the necessary timber for the church which he caused to be built at the Tingvallr.

⁶ *Hornstafi* (Icelandic *horn*, 'corner'). So the church was to be rectangular. When Thorolf Mostbeard removed his pagan

the usual episcopal consecration of the site. This has been characterised as a 'strange' story, but there is nothing strange about it. The missionary, as his name declares, was himself a Norseman, and he wished to convert his Icelandic fellows, settled there since the last quarter of the ninth century; and having learnt his own Christianity in the Scotie Church of the Hebridean Isles, he was equipped with just the bare essentials as understood even so late by that Church, namely, materials for building the still customary rectangular oratory and cell of timber. In lieu of the older barbaric hallowing practised by Columba in Iona, he took with him earth from some properly consecrated ground elsewhere. He was further instructed to dedicate his new church to St. Columkille.¹

The type of the early Scottish oratory was precisely the same as that of Wales and Ireland, an uncompromising rectangle of the smallest dimensions.² It is to be seen in scores of ruins amongst the Western Isles, but these are all of stone, and therefore, be they never so rude, are presumably in most cases far later than the days of St. Columba and his disciples, possibly in many cases as late as the twelfth century. This probably explains why the apse, unknown in Ireland and recorded in only one solitary ancient instance in Wales, is several times found in Scotland, the outcome of Latin influences. There are two examples in the Isle of Arran, namely, Kildonan's chapel, Kilmorie, and St. Mary's chapel at Slidderie in the same parish.³ In both cases remain the foundations only.

temple (*hof*) from Norway to Iceland, besides the timbers of it he took also 'mould from under the stool (altar) whereon Thor had sat.' *Story of the Ere-Dwellers* (*Saga Library*, vol. ii), p. 7. I owe this parallel to the late Albany F. Major.

¹ Also he was enjoined to place his church where he should find 'three standing stones.' As he was provided with the materials for one building only, this is to be understood as referring to some one particular spot, not as a general order 'to build a church wherever he should find three standing stones,' as was wrongly suggested in *Arch. Journ.* xlix, 154. The site of this church was at Esjuberg, under Mt. Esja, to the N.E. of Reykjavik, and at no great distance from the Tingvallr Vatn. Reykjavik is still the seat of the bishopric of Iceland. F. W. Howell (*Icelandic Pictures*

with Pen and Pencil) says there are no remains now to be seen on the site of Esjuberg.

² The kirk of Birnie, 4 miles south of Elgin, is said to be 'unique in the north of Scotland' in so far as it presents 'a distinct chancel and nave with separate roofs.'

³ J. A. Balfour, *Book of Arran*, p. 228. The former was 28 ft. long, the latter 35 ft. by 15 ft., proportions which do not suggest a very early date. Commenting upon the smallness of the early oratories the writer remarks: 'They were intended not for the accommodation of a congregation, but for the use of the clergy and choir. The buildings were in fact but *the chancel of a church, the nave of which was the surrounding ground.*' Had he added that the 'surrounding ground,' i.e. the circular graveyard, was the thing to which the name of 'church' originally applied, there had been nothing more to say.

Bede, speaking of the Scotie preachers who presently passed southward from Iona into Northumbria, says in general terms 'they were monastics above all else.'¹ They would therefore bring with them all the apparatus of a Scotie monastery—*cashel* or *rath*, huts and oratories. He gives us details of some of the settlements made by these early saints, immediate successors of the original apostles from Iona. Where the Irish and Welsh used the term *desertum* to denote the 'place in the wilderness,' the retreat so much affected by the Scotie recluse, Bede uses the word *mansio*, 'place of rest,' a term found occasionally in the Latin *Lives* of the Welsh saints,² and perhaps purposely chosen to emphasise the otherwise homeless nomadism of the earlier missionaries. The most valuable description³ is that of the *mansio* of St. Cuthbert, wherein he died in 687. Every word of it had been submitted to the searching criticism of men who had known the saint and seen the spot. It was 'well considered and perfect.'⁴

Farne was a sterile and waterless islet, 'the less fit for a human dwelling-place because it was a haunt of evil spirits.' Having exorcised these, Cuthbert proceeded to construct his *mansio angusta*. It was almost circular in plan (*situ paene rotundum*), ringed with a vallum of earth, undressed stone and sods,⁵ the diameter being 'between four and five perches,' i.e. 73 ft. more or less.⁶ The material for the vallum was obtained by sinking the floor of the area in the fashion of a Romano-British *circus*,⁷ so

¹ H.E. III, iii, § 156, *monachi erant maxime qui ad praedicandum venerant.*

² e.g. of St. Gwynlliw (Rees, C.B.S. p. 147); of St. Cadoc's Lenten retreats in the islands of Barry and Echni (ibid. p. 45); and of St. Illtyd's first settlement in Hodnant (ibid. p. 162).

³ In *Vita Cuthberti*, c. xvii, from which is epitomised the briefer account in H.E. IV, xxviii, § 346.

⁴ Preface to the *Vita Cuthberti*. In Bede's time this *mansio* was intact. The S.V. has no single equivalent for *mansio*, which it renders variously as *deagol wiic*, *sundorwic*, *nearo wic* and *wunnesse*, and *dygle aancorstowe*. Bede twice speaks of Augustine's first abode in Canterbury as *mansio* (H.E. I, xxv, § 55, xxvi, § 56), where the S.V. has (a) *wunnesse and stowe* and (b) *eardungstowe*; but the 'more suitable' place later allocated to him is called *locum*

sedis (I, xxvi, § 57), where the S.V. has *stowe ond seil*. In III, xxii, § 216, Bede has in *vico regio qui dicitur Rendlaesbam*, id est, *mansio Rendili*: and king Alfred also used *bam* in the sense of 'monastery.'

⁵ *V. Cuthberti*: *murum non secto lapide vel latere et caemento, sed impolitus prorsus lapidibus et cespite, quam de medio loci fodiendo tulerat, composuit.* The H.E. (IV, xxviii, § 346) has merely *circumvallante aggere*, which the S.V. expands to *mid dice ond mid eorðwealle utan ymbsealde ond gefaestnode.*

⁶ *A muro usque ad murum mensura quattuor sive quinque perticarum distentum.*

⁷ Residential earthworks of this peculiar type are only to be found where there is slight risk of flooding, and especially upon the chalk. There is a cluster of them on Plumpton Plain near Lewes, Sussex, apparently a British village; but they are decidedly rare in England.

that, while the wall rose above the ground outside higher than a man's stature, it was 'much higher' above the inner area, so high that the saint could see from his retreat nothing but the sky above him.¹ Within were an oratory and a dwelling. These were partly sunk below the floor of the *mansio*, the rock being excavated in such a way as to leave part of it to serve as footings² for the buildings, which were roofed with unhewn timbers covered with grass. In the one account (*H.E.*) Bede styles them respectively *oratorium* and *habitaculum commune*, in the other (*V. Cuthberti*) *oratorium* and *ad communes usus aptum habitaculum, tuguriunculum, cellula, casula, and monasterium*. The S.V. calls them respectively *cirican* and *gemaene eordunghus*. It is not expressly stated that the two were detached, and the language favours the view that they were contiguous, *commune* meaning 'under one roof.'³ The dwelling had a window, and in its floor was a well.⁴ There is no mention of any cemetery or any consecration-grave, but St. Cedd, consecrating the site of his 'monastery' at Lastingham some years earlier (c. 660), had followed a procedure less abhorrent than that of St. Columba at Iona.⁵ It was Cuthbert's own intention that he should be buried within his *mansio*, on the north side of his oratory, and he actually provided not only his own shroud and coffin, but his own grave. In the end the monks of Lindisfarne persuaded him to allow his burial 'in the inmost part' of their monastic church.

The building abutted upon the vallum of the *mansio* at

¹ Six feet would suffice, unless the saint was unusually tall. The anonymous *Vita Cuthberti* says the floor was sunk one cubit and the vallum raised one cubit.

² Compare the construction of the *Trabaun-na-Chorrees* at Inismurray, and that of St. Benan's Hermitage on the Isle of Aran. In *V. Cuthberti* it is said that the walls of the oratory were made *tabulis minus diligenter coaptatis*, 'with ill-fitted boards,' the crevices stuffed with straw and clay. The whole was rebuilt *a fundamentis* by bishop Eadfrid of Lindisfarne, who succeeded in 698 (ibid.).

³ It cannot mean 'common to all,' for Cuthbert intended to live in it as a solitary, and had expressly built a guest-house of more commodious kind for visitors, near the only landing-place on the island (*V. Cuthberti*, c. xvii). The late Sir H. Howorth

(*Golden Age of the English Church*, iii, 24) also understood that the two chambers were under one roof.

⁴ The chapel of St. Madron, Cornwall, has a well in the south-west corner, and was originally divided into two chambers by a cross-wall (see the plan in *Arch. Journ.* ii, 225), the eastern part for an oratory, the western for a dwelling, both under one roof. Something similar is recorded of St. Cadoc in Wales and of St. Guthlac at Crowland.

⁵ *H.E.* III, xxiii, § 218. The new procedure was by prayer and fasting for the space of 40 days. From the emphasis with which Bede states that Cedd declared this to be 'the customary procedure of his teachers' in consecrating a monastery or a church, one may infer that he was well aware of another way.

the southern side, apparently with no regard for orientation. Thus the spot in which Cuthbert had prepared his grave was to all intents the centre of the whole. As a Welsh writer would have put it, the saint hoped that his relics might mark and make the *mynwent* of his *llan*.

Cuthbert, an abbot and a bishop, was in his day the greatest figure in English Christianity, and he was still living in Farne when Bede was some fourteen years of age. He deliberately elected to withdraw in his feeble years to a barren and uninhabited rock, and to make his home in a comfortless hovel, seemingly with no other garments than those in which he stood,¹ no food save what he could produce by the labour of his own hands,² grass for his roof and native rock for his bed. The actual dimensions of his hut and his oratory Bede does not record, but they may be gauged from the other details given. Probably the saint had standing-room only, yet the S.V. calls his oratory a 'church.' The vallum fenced him about within a space some 25 yards in diameter over all, perhaps 20 yards across the floor, or a total of 314 superficial yards of space.

Had Cuthbert had his wish his body would have been buried within his *mansio* and Farne would have become a place of pilgrimage, so that where he had toiled to harvest a little barley others would have gathered gold. Fate drew his relics after all to Lindisfarne, which waxed the greater thereby; whereas Farne, spoiled of his bones, failed and fell, precisely as did the age-long festival of the nameless hero of Cnocan (ch. xvii) so soon as his grave was desecrated. When, in the twelfth century, there came to live there for 40 years another anchorite named Bartholomew, he found the *mansio* in a state of shameful neglect: 'laymen dwelt in the *habitaculum*, and cattle found shelter in the oratory, so that, if by rare chance any came thither to pray, they could neither kneel for the filth nor pray for the stench of it. Wherefore,' said Bartholomew to the

¹ Excepting indeed the piece of fine linen given to him by the abbess Verca, which he had laid aside to serve him for a shroud. Here is the 'touch of nature' which makes the old saint of the seventh century kin with many hundreds of 'decent' folk of to-day, as poor almost in this world's goods as was he, and as anxious about their own 'decent' burial.

² He was living up to the pattern of the Welsh saints in this regard. But the Saxons were in less need of such example than were the Celts, and if the *Lives* of Saxon saints lay less stress upon this side of their activities, it may be taken as a proof of the general trustworthiness of their narratives.

companions of his death-bed, 'bury me here, lest the like fate befall the oratory a second time.'¹ He knew that only the presence of his bones might safeguard the spot from desecration, and like St. Cuthbert he had prepared his own grave *ad meridianam oratorii sui partem*, on the south side of the building. There he was buried, and presently was built 'a new wall from east to west' screening the southern side of the oratory, with two small apertures through which women folk might have sight of the grave of the man of God; for from St. Cuthbert's time onward the presence of women was discountenanced in Farne.

Geoffrey of Durham, who wrote the *Vita Bartholomaei* at the end of the twelfth century, says that the 'lowly little cottage,' the guest-house built by St. Cuthbert at the haven, was still there, a fabric of unhewn stone and turves. So were the adjoining well and the narrow pathway to the *mansio*. The vallum of the *mansio* would seem to have wasted already into something scarcely recognisable, for he does not mention it; the oratory, he says, was 'hidden in a kind of out-of-the-way depression,'² which St. Cuthbert had dug. Mention is made also of the well within the *habitaculum*, but apparently in the hand of some later scribe.

Cuthbert did not roof his building with stone, although the barren islet provided no timber large enough for his purpose. We may therefore the more readily believe that in the like conditions, and especially in the islets off the western shores of Ireland and Scotland, other early saints followed the like course, and may feel the greater doubt whether any of the stone-roofed oratories of Ireland be really of the age commonly attributed to them.

Very remarkable is the resemblance between this *mansio* of St. Cuthbert in Farne and the *circus* of the Romano-British time.³ It had the same circular plan and the same vallum. It was even very much of the size of the average small rural *circus*. It had the same depressed floor, and like the *circus* it had no outer fosse. If, as would seem to be the fact, the Anglo-Saxons had learnt to call the

¹ *Vita S. Bartholomaei Farnensis* (Rolls Series), i, 295.

² *In quodam secretae concavitatis latibulo positum.*

³ Supra, ch. ix.

Romano-British thing by the name of *circ*, it was almost inevitable that they should apply the same name to this *mansio* of the Christian saint and to any other like it.

John of Beverley's *mansio* was about one and a half miles distant from the church at Hexham, on the north bank of the Tyne. It was 'somewhat retired among a few trees, surrounded by a vallum, and it contained a cemetery of St. Michael the Archangel.'¹ It was big enough to permit the bishop to reside there for occasional rests 'with a few others,' devoting himself to prayer and study. On one occasion he brought thither a seemingly incurable invalid, and caused to be built for him 'a little hut (*tugurium*) within the precincts (*conseptis*) of the *mansio*.' Clearly it was a typical Scotie monastic settlement, a circular enclosure provided with huts and oratories scattered about in irregular fashion, with space enough for the erection of others if needed. Clearly also in this case the ground was already hallowed by burial—it was already a cemetery.²

Of Chad's *mansio*³ at Lichfield we are told only that it was 'not far from the church,' that the saint was wont to read and pray there with eight or nine brethren, and that it had its own oratory. Nothing is said of any burial-ground, and when Chad died (672) he was buried 'near' the then church of St. Mary; and when the cathedral (St. Peter's) was built, his remains were translated to the high altar of the new building.

Women also had their *mansiones*. Heiu, the first Saxon woman of Northumbria to take monastic vows, makes her *mansio*⁴ at Tadcaster.

¹ Bede, *H.E.* V, ii, § 362, *mansio quaedam secretior nemore raro et vallò circumdata . . . habens coemeterium S. Michaelis Archangeli*. In Ireland, says O'Curry, it was usual to surround a residential *rath* or *lis* with a belt of trees. Caesar noticed the same practice in Gaul (*B.G.* vi, 30, 3). It was a habit which has maintained itself even in modern England.

² Richard of Hexham says the *mansio* overhung the river, that it contained an oratory dedicated to St. Michael which belonged to the monastery at Hexham, and that it was called Ernesshaw or Herneshalg (*Latine, Mons Aquilae*). Raine identified

it with the place now called St. John's Lee, which used to be the scene of 'a kind of religious wake held on 23rd-24th June' (Howorth, *Golden Age of the English Church*, iii, 152), i.e. there may have been a confusion of John of Beverley with St. John Baptist and his festival of midsummer day. Others identify the spot with Warden, where is a church dedicated to St. Michael.

³ Bede *H.E.* IV, iii, § 260. The site is said to be represented by the modern Stowe, anciently Chadstowe, outside Lichfield.

⁴ *H.E.* IV, xxiii, § 324. The S.V. has *wiic*.