Arturius

A Quest For Camelot

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FOREWORD

A common complaint by readers of books on the subject of King Arthur, is that no matter how long the book or how packed with information it may be, at the end, the reader is still left asking the question, “but who was Arthur?”

The reason for this is that most writers on the subject of King Arthur by cramming their books full of information, derived mainly from legends, myths, and poems which are historically of no value, manage to create the illusion of having explained to you who Arthur really was, where in fact you still do not know the answer to the question, “but who was Arthur?”.

In this book, I have used no legends or poems or myths, or the unreliable ‘Annals of Wales’. Instead I have used the more reliable ‘Annals of Ulster’ and ‘Annals of Tigernach’, together with Adomnan’s ‘Life of Columba’.

So it is based not on legends, but rather on the best available, historical evidence. Therefore, at the end of this book you will not be left to wonder, “who really was Arthur?” because this book will provide a clear and unequivocal answer to that question. Most importantly, it will be based on historical evidence.

The name Arthur in it’s 6th Century AD form is Artur, and as the monks who recorded the earliest history, wrote in Latin, they recorded the name as Arturius. Any documents where the name Arthur is spelled with an ‘h’ are unlikely to have originated from before the 12th Century AD, and are therefore unreliable as evidence of 6th Century history.

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INTRODUCTION

ARTHUR - FACT OR FICTION

No legend has aroused more interest, argument and debate in the Western World, than the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

Many authors and historians have forwarded their own particular theories as to whether or not he existed, and where. He has been placed in various locations, from Cornwall and Wales to Brittany in France. Most however, are agreed that if he existed he would have been a sixth century dark age leader who fought vigorously against the encroaching Saxons and Picts, to preserve the independent British Kingdoms.

Unfortunately, up to the present time, no-one has been able to pin down an historical Arthur, and to locate him in a specific time and place in history, and in fact, tend to identify him with various Kings of various names. Others claim he is a composite figure and build their theories accordingly.

It is the purpose of this book to reconcile the legend of Arthur with historical fact, to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that Arthur did exist. To place him in a specific period in time as a recorded historical figure, with the name Arthur, or rather Arturius as this was the original version of his name.

No hypothetical King but a real historical flesh and blood commander of the sixth century AD.

The legend of King Arthur and his continuing popularity is due mainly to a writer of the fifteenth century called Sir Thomas Mallory. His stories were published under the title “The Death of Arthur”. None of his material was original, he in fact drew it from two sources, one British and the other French.

The British source being mainly the stories of one Geoffrey of Monmouth, a medieval cleric who had written a supposed history of the Kings of Britain, which included Arthur. Geoffrey of Monmouth had taken traditional tales of Arthur from Celtic and possibly French sources and woven a fantastic unreal story of Arthur which bears little resemblance to reality.

The second or French source which Sir Thomas Mallory used, gave interesting glimpses and mentions of real historical figures. Most important among these is a King Urien and his son Owain, mainly because we know Urien and Owain were real people who lived in the second half of the sixth century AD.

It therefore gives us a time fix, because as they are mentioned as contemporaries of Arthur, it then follows that Arthur if real, also belongs to this period in time.

Most readers will be familiar with Morgan, Arthur's sister, she is claimed by most, to be unreal, a complete invention, based on the Irish battle goddess, Morrigan.
We hope to prove differently.

Most will also remember Merlin, Camelot and Avalon, again we hope to prove all existed.

Not so many may be familiar with King Lot, the King of the Picts, who nevertheless is an important character, because his son Modred was Arthur's opponent in the last fatal battle at Camlann.

Few perhaps will be aware of the thirteen British Kings of the North. Although not all are part of the legend, they are nevertheless entwined in reality.

Can we therefore find an Arthur who was a contemporary and indeed an ally of King Urien and the British Kings of the North ?

An Arthur who had a Camelot, who could have been buried at Avalon, and what of the round table?, perhaps not a table, but rather a meeting place or forum where the warriors of Arthur would meet, but round in shape nevertheless. Could this Arthur have existed in the second half of the sixth century AD, and could he logically be connected with all the aforementioned places, remember they would have to be in fairly close proximity to one another. I believe the answer to be an emphatic yes.

The search begins surprisingly perhaps not in Cornwall or the West Country with which Arthur only became associated through the fanciful stories of Geoffrey of Monmouth the 12th century cleric, but rather in the North in the region lying between the two Roman Walls, the Antonine which formed the Northern boundary and which ran between the River Clyde and the Firth of Forth, and Hadrians Wall which formed the Southern boundary, and which ran between the Solway Firth and the River Tyne.

In the second half of the sixth century AD, Urien and the Kings of the North were besieged from the East by the Saxons of Bernicia, which formed part of modern day Northumberland, and from the North by the Picts.

The Picts lived in what is now Northern Scotland mainly above the river Forth.

Their traditional allies, the Scots, had arrived as settlers from Ireland and were at this time fairly well established in what we now call Argyle but what they termed Dalriada.

For reasons which we will discuss later, at this particular period of history after centuries of enmity and bitterness, the Scots became allies of the Britons.

The Scots occupying land lying between the Picts and Britons as well as their Kingdom of Dalriada.

In the second half of the sixth century AD the Scots pursued a policy of aggressive expansion against the Picts and Saxons, and I believe it was at this time that history threw to the fore a leader who fought under a united Christian banner with the Kings of the Britons in their wars against the Picts and Saxons, who would be remembered even to the present time.

His name was Arturius and he was a prince, the eldest son of one of the British Kings of the North.

As I have already stated it is the purpose of this book to reconcile the legend of Arthur with historical fact, to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that Arthur did exist and to enable the reader to accept what follows it will be necessary for them to disregard everything they have previously believed, to forget entirely all preconceived notions as to where and when Arthur existed.

In short, to dismiss everything they may have previously read and been led to believe. To forget Cornwall and Tintagel Castle, the West Country, and even Wales, and to come back through time and space to the second half of the sixth century AD to the wild and mysterious land lying between the two Roman Walls, which is called in Welsh tradition 'Y Gogled' or the North.

I intend to prove that Arthur's mileu was not the 6th century South but the 6th century North, that in doing so we remove the Celtic Mist obscuring this enigmatic figure, and by using the few historical facts available, to prove his existence beyond all reasonable doubt. Not within a resplendent court, which was the creation of the romantic writers of later centuries, but rather as a Celtic Warrior Prince, the battle leader of the allied British Christian Kingdoms of the North, in their wars against the Pagan Saxon and Pict in the second half of the sixth century AD.

D F Carroll

SIR THOMAS MALLORY

HIS WORK - LE MORTE D'ARTHUR OR THE DEATH OF ARTHUR

This work was written more than 500 years ago, Sir Thomas Mallory did not invent any of the story of Arthur, but simply drew it from two existing sources, one British and one French.

The British source can be traced ultimately to the writing of Geoffrey of Monmouth, because although Mallory was said to have used a 14th Century poem for the story of Arthur's expedition to Rome, this was itself based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's fanciful story contained within his 'History of the Kings of Britain'.

The French source Mallory drew on was vast and complex, and consisted mainly of a work known as the Vulgate Cycle.

There is no need here to trace the various elements that made up his French source, but suffice to say that the main body of his work was derived from this source.

Mallory then was responsible for the fusion of the various ideas and elements that form the basis of what is known today as the Arthurian Legend.

In his work we find some interesting clues which point us more to the North rather than the South of Britain as the ultimate source of the Arthurian Legends.

For example, he often uses the word Liones. Liones was a word used in Old French and Breton to describe Lothian, which as everyone knows, is a region of what we now call Scotland. He sometimes used a different spelling and wrote 'Lyonesse' for Liones.

Incredibly subsequent writers ignored the fact that Liones was in North Britain, and in fact a part of modern day Scotland, and instead attached the word Lyonesse to Cornwall, claiming it to be
part of a submerged area off the coast of Cornwall, and of course the fact that it was supposedly submerged and no longer visible adding to its mystery as part of the Arthurian legends.

We can be certain that the French writers who were the source of most of Sir Thomas Mallory's work, were in fact referring to a real and tangible region of Scotland when they referred to 'Liones", and not some mythical, submerged region off the coast of Cornwall. Liones meant Lothian.

Another interesting point worth noting is the story of Tristram. Tristram is the latinization of Drust, who was a Pictish King. There is no need to discuss the whole story of Tristram

here, suffice it to explain that he is another character in the legend who again has been appropriated by the South, and Cornwall in particular. When in fact all the evidence of a real Tristram comes from the North, and again from Scotland. he is called Tristram de Lionnesse, which attaches him firmly to Scotland and the North. He is mentioned in the old Welsh Triads as Tristram (Drust) son or successor of Tallorch, and since Tallorch was a Pictish King and Tristram was indeed his successor, there can be no doubt as to his origin being in the North, as the Picts only lived in the North.

Also, and perhaps most interestingly, the story of Tristram entered the Arthurian legends directly from France, and not from Welsh or English sources, which would surely suggest that they had arrived in France directly from their source of origin, that being Scotland and the North.

Most importantly however, is the fact that the French writers of the Tristram story were writing of a real person from a region of Scotland, this being the case there is every reason to believe that their stories of Arthur were based also on a real flesh and blood character from the same region.

Mallory's work was then the basis of what we know today as the Arthurian Legend, and as we have stated, he drew his information from two sources, one French and one British. The British source was ultimately the writing of a 12th century cleric known to history as Geoffrey of Monmouth.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

AND THE HISTORY OF THE KINGS OF BRITAIN

It is the purpose of this chapter to show that there was never any connection between the historical Arthur and any part of England until a 12th century cleric known as Geoffrey of Monmouth was responsible for writing or at least translating a false and fabled history known as the 'History of the Kings of Britain'.

A great deal of this history was concerned with the birth and reign of Arthur. Before Geoffrey, the earliest references to Arthur never described him as King, but simply as Arthur, the 'Dux Bellorum' or battle leader, and it seems likely that it was Geoffrey who first described Arthur as a King.

Although proved by historians to be almost completely untrue, it was nevertheless accepted by some of Geoffrey's contemporaries as historical fact, and as Geoffrey had mentioned place names in England and Wales in connection with Arthur, it was inevitable that Arthur would henceforth be associated with certain regions, especially Cornwall and Wales, and he would also from this time assume the title of King.

For example, Geoffrey asserted that Arthur was conceived in Tintagel Castle in Cornwall, although no castle existed there at that time.

Since then Tintagel has figured in Arthurian legend not only as the place where Arthur was conceived but also as the place of his birth, completely without any historical basis or evidence to support the claims.

The same can be said for the rest of Cornwall, Wales and Southern England, they have no genuine historical claim to be linked with Arthur, the connection merely exists from the 12th Century and was a direct result of the writing of Geoffrey and his mythical 'History of the Kings of Britain'.

As his name implies, Geoffrey was born in or near Monmouth in South Wales.

He referred to himself sometimes as Geoffrey Arthur. Arthur perhaps being his father's name, and as the name Arthur was not Welsh, it is thought that perhaps his father may have been a Breton, the Bretons being of the same Celtic stock as the Cornish and Welsh.

Around the year 1136 he was responsible for writing the History of the Kings of Britain. This was supposedly the first account in Latin of the History of the British Kings and in particular King Arthur, as Geoffrey had termed him.

Geoffrey insisted the work was merely a translation of an ancient British work given to him by his friend Walter Mapes.

The entire story is generally agreed to be a mixture of fable and fantasy and bears little relation to actual history until around the middle of the 6th Century AD. From this time the history can in some respects be reconciled with historical fact.

However, we can safely say that the portion of Geoffrey's 'history' concerning Arthur, which covers the period of the first half of the 6th Century AD, can be regarded as fantasy in almost every respect. Researchers have vainly searched this 'history' for clues to Arthur's existence when it has already been proved beyond all doubt that historically it is a nonsense and its only value can be in its acknowledged antiquity.

Geoffrey's purpose seemed not to present historical fact, but rather to portray the Ancient Britons as a nation with origins no less noble than the Greeks and Romans, who invariably defeated their foes, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable odds. In fact a nation which could never be conquered in battle but could only be destroyed by fratricidal civil war and disease.

Geoffrey begins his history by relating how Brutus, a mythical great grandson of Aeneas of Troy, is born in Italy, but having been responsible for the accidental killing of his father Silvius, is exiled to Greece.

Here he finds the remnants of the Trojan people, brutally suppressed by the Greeks.

Organising them into a fighting force once more, he captures the King of the Greeks, forcing him to set free the Trojans and to provide a fleet of ships for their escape, plus a vast quantity of treasure. Last but not least he forces the King to hand over his daughter Ignone to be his bride, thereby making the descendants of Brutus (the ancient Britons) the heirs of the glories of both Greece and Troy.

From this fabulous origin of the British Nation Geoffrey goes on to relate the deeds of the most noble descendants of Brutus.

Later in the 'history' Julius Caesar is twice defeated by the Briton Cassivellaunus and it is only because of treachery by a nephew of the Briton that Caesar succeeds at his third attempt.

Geoffrey continued in the same vein and eventually made Constantine I of Britain the Conqueror of Rome and Ruler of the Roman Empire. Needless to say this never happened, Constantine did invade Gaul (France) but was defeated.

Eventually Geoffrey relates the story of Arthur which is a fantastic concoction of fantasy and legend. The folklore of Arthur was well known amongst the Celtic population before Geoffrey's 'history' appeared, but as we have stated Arthur was not known as a King but simply as a great battle leader.

However, according to Geoffrey, Arthur was the son of Uther Pendragon whom Geoffrey claimed was the brother of a real British leader called Ambrosius. Ambrosius was real enough, and this is a good example of how Geoffrey would use a real historical figure to help give credibility to his history.

Uther had fallen in love apparently with the Duke of Cornwall's wife, Igerna. Angered by Uther's advances towards his wife, Gorlois the Duke fled back to Cornwall, placing his wife in Tintagel Castle, while he himself occupied Dimilioc.

Unable to breach the castle defences, Uther employed the Wizard Merlin to aid him.

It may be worth pointing out here that the character of Merlin was based on a real 6th Century British Bard or Druid known to history as Myrddin, whom we will discuss in a later chapter.

Merlin supposedly transformed Uther into a perfect double of Gorlois the Duke of Cornwall, by which magic Uther was able to gain access to the Castle of Tintagel, make love to Igerna who thought she was being loved by her husband Gorlois, and by this means Arthur was conceived. All this written as a serious history!. Gradually Tintagel would come to be regarded as Arthur's birthplace.

When finally Geoffrey relates the story of Arthur he makes him almost super human. He defeats the Saxons, the Scots, the Picts, invades the Orkneys, Ireland, Iceland, Gothland, Norway, Dacia, Aquitaine, and Gaul, where he defeats the Romans, and is only prevented from taking Rome itself, when he has to return to Britain because of his nephew Modred's rebellion.

Geoffrey's 'history' is written in great detail, which would indicate that it is a fabrication, as history from the earliest sources is noted for its brevity, a whole year sometimes being summed up in two lines.

Geoffrey knew when writing his history that there was a gap in known history between the years 500 AD and 550 AD approximately.

This was due to the writing of a 6th Century monk known to history as Gildas.

When writing his historic account Gildas had mentioned a British leader who had lived somewhere before the year 500 AD, named Ambrosius and also a Battle of Badon which occurred somewhere around this time.
He had then jumped to around the year 550 AD where he gave an account of five British Kings.

The history of the first half of the 6th Century was therefore a void, which Geoffrey exploited fully. He simply filled the gap with the story of Arthur and his supposed father

Uther, knowing that no-one could argue with it.

Having done this Geoffrey had no choice but to make Arthur's demise somewhere before the year 550 AD, otherwise any later and Geoffrey's account would conflict with Gildas'.

It is now painfully obvious that Geoffrey was responsible for choosing the date 542 AD as the date of Arthur's demise, he had little choice.

Geoffrey tied up his version of Arthur's story very neatly, everything fitted perfectly.

Arthur occupied the space in history between Gildas' account of Ambrosius c. 500 AD and his account of the five British Kings c. 550 AD.

Since we know Geoffrey's 'history' regarding Arthur was all but complete fantasy, it is reasonable to assume that the date he gave for Arthur's death was also fantasy and totally incorrect. In fact I believe he gave the date of Arthur's passing forty years earlier than it actually was, simply because he had no other choice, to do otherwise would make a nonsense of his supposed 'history'.

Arthur was made to fill the gap in known history and therefore had to die at a date before known history. There is conclusive evidence that the real Arthur died forty years later, it is a date recorded in historical records, but more of that later.

In Geoffrey's account, Arthur on his death bed passed his kingdom to Constantine, the King of Dumnonia (Cornwall and Devon).

Constantine was a real King, and this is another example of Geoffrey weaving real characters into his 'history'.

He then stated that a few years after the passing of Arthur, Constantine died too. If this account was true it would mean that Constantine had died around the year 550 AD.

In fact, in reality, Constantine lived to a ripe old age and died in the late 6th Century.

There is strong evidence however that Constantine met the real Arthur, but in the last quarter of the 6th Century, but more of this later too.

The story of Arthur and his exploits were well known to the Celtic population of Britain, he was remembered not as a King but as a great battle leader.
These stories I believe (for reasons to be explained later) had filtered down through the years to Wales and Cornwall from the North, from the land known in Welsh tradition as Y Gogled - or the North.

This was the land lying between the two great Roman Walls, the Antonine and Hadrians.

This is not so implausible when you remember that the British language was spoken all the way from the river Clyde in Scotland to the tip of Cornwall in an unbroken chain all the way down the Western side of Britain.

No serious modern historian regards Geoffrey's 'history' as factual, but in the 12th Century and indeed for some centuries more it was accepted as such by some. It did however achieve the object of popularising the Arthurian legend and helped to spread it throughout the Continent of Europe.

Until this time the stories of Arthur had been passed on the whole, by word of mouth, from generation to generation.

Also from this time, that is the publication of Geoffrey's 'history' and it must be emphasised only from this time, Arthur would be forever associated with regions of Cornwall and Wales, and would be regarded as a Cornish, Welsh or West Country King, without a scrap of written evidence.

So although no-one believes a word of Geoffrey's account of Arthur, he would nevertheless be forever connected with Cornwall and Wales, and the first half of the 6th Century AD.

All this without a shred of historical evidence, because there is no evidence whatsoever that any early 6th Century leader by the name of Arthur was associated with Cornwall or Wales or the West country, but conclusive evidence that he existed in the later 6th Century AD in another part of Britain, many miles from Cornwall, in fact in the North, in that land lying between the two Roman Walls, in what we now term Southern Scotland.

To sum up we can say the effects of Geoffrey's 'history' regarding Arthur were:

1 It ensured that henceforth Arthur would be forever associated with Cornwall and Wales and the first half
of the 6th century AD.

2 It ensured that researchers looking for clues to Arthur's existence in these regions would never find any, because he was simply never there.

3 But lastly, and most importantly, it helped to ensure that Arthur's name and fame would spread and endure even to the present day.

GEOFFREY II

Although it is certain that Geoffrey wrote an almost complete fictional history, it is equally certain that it contains a number of real historical figures and perhaps some facts.
We know that when he speaks of Constantine and Urien that they existed. Urien, he mentions as a subject and ally of Arthur, and I think this was so.

Urien was a King of the North, in fact he is remembered as one of the thirteen Kings of the North, (who will be discussed later), and no doubt Geoffrey had used traditional British folklore here, which had linked Arthur and Urien, and I am sure this can be proved. Was Geoffrey then aware of the real historical Arthur? Whether or not he was, and knew who he really was and his true time and place in history, we may never know, but the fact that he had taken a leader and warrior who had never been King and assigned him the role of King, would ensure that anyone trying to establish the true identity of Arthur would find the task impossible, because the name of Arthur would never appear in the list of Kings of any of the nations inhabiting the British Isles.

No matter how great a warrior or leader he may have been, his name would never appear on the royal lists, which would only serve to add to the mystery and the legend.

Two other points worth mentioning are the names Geoffrey gave to Arthur's sword, which he called 'Caliburn' and his spear which he called 'Ron'. Over the centuries Caliburn would eventually come to be known as 'Excalibur', but to the best of our knowledge Geoffrey called it 'Caliburn'.

Caliburn I believe was derived from the Gaelic Calgbhior, meaning the point of a sharp weapon or Calgburn meaning sharp water. The prefix of both words coming from Calgach, meaning sharp or prickly.

Why you may ask, would I look for a Gaelic meaning of Caliburn. The answer is simple. The name for Arthur's spear is given as 'Ron' and while my explanation of Caliburn is conjecture, this is not the case with the word 'Ron'. Ron is definitely Gaelic. As far as I know there has been no satisfactory explanation for this name being attached to Arthur's spear.

However, it is definitely Gaelic and means a seal or sea calf. There is also a gaelic word 'RHIONN' meaning 'sharp'. This raised the question, if Arthur gave his spear a Gaelic nickname, was he therefore a Gaelic speaker. We shall see.

The effect of Geoffrey's work was to create an awareness of Arthur, and claims would be made throughout the country regarding connections with him. The most famous claim was possibly that made by the Abbey at Glastonbury.

THE GLASTONBURY LEGENDS

AND GLASTONBURY ABBEY'S CLAIMS TO BE THE SITE OF AVALON AND THE SUPPOSED BURIAL PLACE OF ARTHUR

Since the 12th Century AD King Arthur has been connected with the Abbey at Glastonbury.

Glastonbury is situated in South West England and it must be emphasised that Arthur is connected with this region only from the 12th Century AD, although he himself lived in the 6th Century AD.

It is the purpose of this chapter to explain how this connection came about, and to show that it is completely false and without justification.

There are two branches of the Glastonbury legends.

The first asserts that thirty years or so after the crucifixion of Christ, St.Joseph of Arimathea accompanied by a band of followers, had travelled from Gaul (France) to South West England. St.Joseph had also supposedly brought with him the Holy Grail, the sacred chalice which Christ had used at the last supper, which he had obtained from Pontius Pilate, and in which he had collected the blood of Christ.

According to the legend they made their way towards Glastonbury and eventually wearied with their travels they rested on a hill, which from then was known as 'Wearyall Hill'.

Supposedly at the foot of Glastonbury Tor St.Joseph thrust his staff into the earth, and immediately the staff took root and blossomed, a heavenly sign that their journey was completed.

The disciples then built a church supposedly under the guidance of St.Gabriel, the 'Vetusta Ecclesia' or Ancient Church.

Indeed one version of the legend asserts that when the disciples arrived at Glastonbury they found a church already built by Christ himself!

Near the foot of Glastonbury Tor, St.Joseph was said to have buried the Holy Grail, but in more recent times Chalice Well is claimed to be the burial spot. Not surprisingly the Holy Grail has never been found at Glastonbury and it does not take a great deal of imagination to realise why.

These legends may well have been acceptable to the population of the 12th Century, and indeed to some of the more gullible in succeeding centuries, but today we are rather more realistic and require more evidence to substantiate any such claims.

The second legend asserts that King Arthur is buried at Glastonbury and that in ancient times Glastonbury was called the Isle of Avalon, Arthur's final resting place. This is the part of the legend that concerns us here, but it is necessary to relate the first part of the legend about St.Joseph, to illustrate that if it is possible for anyone to concoct a fabulous story about St.Joseph and the Holy Grail then others are equally capable of concocting a second one regarding King Arthur, especially if it is to their benefit.

This second legend regarding Arthur originated in the year 1191, when the Monks of Glastonbury announced to the world that the grave of King Arthur and his Queen had been dug up at Glastonbury.

This supposed discovery of Arthur's grave was the real beginning of the two fold Glastonbury legend, and the confirmation needed to firmly establish them. The grave of Arthur had supposedly been found at Glastonbury. According to legend, Arthur had been buried at Avalon, so therefore from henceforth it would be claimed that Glastonbury and Avalon were one and the same.

Why you may ask would the monks go to the trouble of pretending to find the grave of Arthur?

The answer is relatively simple and straightforward.

Glastonbury Abbey was virtually destroyed by fire on the 25th May 1184, all that remained was a belltower and a single chamber.

Money had to be found to rebuild the abbey.

The King of England, Henry II, responded to a national appeal for funds, by instructing his Chamberlain to devote the unexpended balance of the years royal revenue to the rebuilding fund.

The monks themselves proceeded to uncover the remains and relics of famous saints from amongst the ashes, they even claimed to have discovered the body of their former Abbot, Dunstan, even though his remains were in fact at Christchurch, Canterbury.

These various remains were enshrined so as to attract the generosity of pilgrims.

Many nobles followed the King's lead in donating money, and the appeal was so successful that by 1186 the monks were able to dedicate the new Church of St.Mary, or the Lady Chapel as it came to be called.

However, in 1189 Henry II, their generous benefactor died with the work only begun on the great church. His successor Richard I needed money for the Crusade, so alas the Monks of Glastonbury were overlooked, and their appeal fund soon dried up.

Stories of Arthur had flourished in the country for centuries and with the publication of the 'History of the Kings of Britain' by Geoffrey of Monmouth the story had become even more widespread and popular.

The monks saw their opportunity, and as the financial crisis deepened at Glastonbury, they came up with a superb idea, to declare to the world that they had found the burial place of King Arthur at Glastonbury. The resulting flow of pilgrims and their gifts would more than help to swell the abbey funds.

It was a resounding success and it goes on succeeding even to the present day, when visitors from around the world still come to see the supposed burial place of Arthur.

Whoever it was who was unearthed that day, it was most decidedly not Arthur.

The monks simply needed a publicity stunt to aid their financial collections, and a better one than this would be difficult to imagine.

Many nobles and church dignitaries had been buried at Glastonbury and it was perhaps one of these who was exhumed, but the result was, that, from henceforth Arthur would be connected with Glastonbury, and Glastonbury would claim that it was the ancient site of Avalon. Needless to say the claims are without foundation, there is no historical connection between Glastonbury and Arthur, not even a shred of evidence beyond the monks claim in the 12th Century that they had found his grave; which was undoubtedly a false one, designed merely to swell their restoration funds.

Incidentally the monks also produced a cross which they claimed was in the grave, on this cross Arthur was called Rex or King, which immediately gave the lie to their claim, because Arthur was never called King in the earliest documents, and had only been called a 'King', by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his 12th Century history.

But perhaps more interestingly, on the cross, Arthur's name was spelled in its earliest form Arturius, which is a latinization of the name.

This may perhaps point to the fact that the monks were aware of a document which mentions the real Arturius, this document was written in the 7th Century and the Arturius mentioned was a leader in a land far to the North of Glastonbury, in fact in the land we know now as Scotland, but more of this later.

Regarding the claim that Glastonbury was the Isle of Avalon. It was claimed that Avalon was actually derived from the British, Ynys Afallon, supposedly meaning apple bearing island, and that Ynys Afallon was actually the ancient name of Glastonbury. This is untrue. In fact it was known, according to William of Malmesbury, as 'Ineswitrin' or the glassy isle. Apparently the area around Glastonbury being swampy, until the monks drained the land. To prove Glastonbury was known not as Ynys Afallon but in fact as Ineswitrin, the

following is a passage from William of Malmesbury's De Gestis Regum:

" In the year of our Lord's incarnation 601, that is the fifth after the arrival of St.Augustine, the King of Devonshire, on the petition of Abbot Worgrez, granted to the old church which is there situated the land called Ineswitrin, containing five cassates.

Who this King might be, the antiquity of the instrument prevents our knowing. But that he was a Briton cannot be doubted, because he called Glastonbury, Ineswitrin, in his vernacular tongue, and that, in the British, it is so called, is well known".

So as far back as 601 AD it was called Ineswitrin - or the glassy isle and not Ynys Afallon.

GLASTONBURY II

As we have seen the origins of the Glastonbury legends can be traced to the 12th Century.

In this century around the year 1135 a William of Malmesbury, perhaps the greatest historian of his time visited Glastonbury Abbey and wrote the 'De Antiquitate Glastoniensis Ecclesiae', concerning the origins and development of Glastonbury.

Unfortunately William's story did not satisfy the monks of Glastonbury and over the course of the succeeding years to suit their purposes they altered and forged the original wherever they saw fit. However, they left William's name on their 'official' history to give credence to their fabulous tale.

Until in the 13th Century version of the De Antiquitate, that is the one revised and altered by the monks of Glastonbury we read that Arthur was a benefactor and patron of Glastonbury and that he was also in fact buried there, all this despite the fact that William of Malmesbury, the author, had never mentioned Arthur in connection with Glastonbury.

How can we prove the monks were guilty of forgery?

William had copied relevant portions of the De Antiquitate into a revised edition of his De Gestis Regum Anglorum, which dealt with the history of Britain before the coming of the English. Thus by comparing the relevant passages of Williams De Gestis Regum with the surviving copies of the much altered De Antiquitate we can compare what William had actually said with what the monks of Glastonbury had written in their much altered and forged version.

William had mentioned Arthur in his book the De Gestis Regum (Anglorum) dwelling at some length on Arthur's exploits and battles, but drawing a dividing line between the historical Arthur and the Arthur of legend and romance, saying - "This is the Arthur concerning whom the idle tales of the Britons rave wildly even today, a man truly worthy to be celebrated, not in foolish dreams and deceitful fables, but in truthful history, since for a long time he sustained the declining fortunes of his country, and incited the unbroken spirit of the people to war".

So William had obviously believed in an historical Arthur but had never mentioned him in connection with Glastonbury, in fact regarding Arthur's burial place William had said "the sepulchre of Arthur is nowhere known". Interestingly William did not call Arthur King but implied he was rather a great leader.

When William spoke of foolish dreams and deceitful fables he perhaps had in mind the Welsh tales of the Mabinogion and other like stories, where the historical Arthur was no longer permitted to exist but was placed in the realm of fantasy and fairy.

Where Arthur is used as a background for stories of giants, monsters and wizardry. Where in fact he may not have existed in the original stories, but was most probably added at a later date to suit the taste of the storyteller or listener. Whatever the case, a great disservice was done to the historical Arthur when he was placed in these fairy tales.

The Welsh stories of the Mabinogion bear no resemblance to reality and no doubt are developments from tales of ancient British mythology. They would certainly have been added to and altered by the bards over the centuries before they were finally written down in their present form.

Researchers have incredibly, from time to time, scrutinised these tales for clues to Arthur's existence, when there was never any need, as proof of his existence was always available in reliable historical documents, which we will discuss later.

The effect of these tales on the story of Arthur was simply to leave it open to ridicule, contempt and disbelief.

Arthur the warrior was however mentioned at some length in a document known as 'The History of the Britons' and generally assumed to be the work of a monk called Nennius.

"Then it was, that the magnanimous Arthur, with the Kings of the Britons, fought against them. Though there were many more noble than himself, yet twelve times he was chosen their commander, and was as often conqueror.

The first battle was at the mouth of the River Glein.

The second, third, fourth and fifth, were on another river, by the Britons called Dubglas, in the region Linuis.

The sixth on the River Bassas.

The seventh in the Wood of Celyddon. The eighth was near Guinnion Castle, where Arthur bore the image of the Holy Virgin, upon his shield.

The ninth was at the City of Legions.

The tenth was on the banks of the River Tribruit.

The eleventh was on the Mountain Bregion, which we call Cat Bregion.

The twelfth was on the Hill of Badon, in this battle, nine hundred and forty fell by his hand alone."

Nennius

NENNIUS

AND THE HISTORY OF THE BRITONS

The work known as the ‘History of the Britons’, is generally ascribed to a monk known to history as Nennius. Virtually nothing is known of the author. The work is believed to have originated in the late 8th Century, although it was revised in the 10th Century.

The history is perhaps best described by the author himself when he says “I made a heap of all I could find”. This is not to disparage it in any way, but it is perhaps as well to remember that the events described in the history do not necessarily follow in any chronological order.

He relates many things and tells us he has copied from the annals of the Scots and Saxons some of his information.

However the section which is of interest to us here is his description of the battles of Arthur.

The earliest manuscript describes twelve battles fought by Arthur
including one on Mount Agned.

A later version replaces the battle of Mount Agned with the battle of Bregion. Some manuscripts give Bregimion

Various locations have been suggested as the sites of these battles, and arguments for locations all over Britain have been put forward.

However, there can be no argument with the seventh battle which was fought in the forest of Celyddon. This forest was the same one which Merlin/Myrddin retreated to after the battle of Arderydd, and it was definitely situated in the region between the Roman Walls.

The same can be claimed for the battle of Bregimion which in some manuscripts replaces Mount Agned as the scene of the eleventh battle. Bregimion is the British or Welsh equivalent of Bremium, the Roman fort near the village of High Rochester, it lay on the borders of the Ottadini tribe and again it is situated in the region between the Roman Walls.

As for the first battle fought on the river Glein, there is a river Glen in Northumberland and this would seem to be the site of the battle.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth were fought on the banks of the river Dubglas.

There are several rivers called Douglas, the modern equivalent of Dubglas, again in the region between the Roman Walls.

The sixth battle on the river Bassas, is thought to have been fought not on a river called Bassas, but rather in the region of the rock called Bass, which lies just off the East Coast of Scotland, which is again between the Roman Walls. The word Bass being latinised to Bassas.

The seventh as we mentioned was in the forest of Celyddon.

The eighth battle was at Castellum Guinnion, several claims have been made for this site, but most agree that Binchester has the best claim, this of course being close again to the Roman Wall of Hadrian.

The ninth was in the Urbs Legionis, or the City of the Legion, which probably meant Chester. This battle was actually fought in 613 AD some 30 years after Arthur's death.

The tenth was on the river called Tribruit. It seems no reasonable claim can be made for the site of this battle.

The eleventh we have already mentioned.

The twelfth was on Mons Badonis or the battle of Badon - it seems justifiable to say that this battle was not one of the original battle list and along with the 9th battle of the City of the Legions, has at some stage in the development of the story been added to the battle list. This was fought somewhere around 500 AD, before Arthur's time.

It seems that if we discount the ninth and twelfth battles we are left with a list of ten battles, seven have strong claims to have been fought either within or in close proximity to the Roman Walls and three can claim to be definitely situated in the region within the Roman Walls. These are:

The Battle of Bassas
The Battle of Bregimion
The Battle of the Forest of Celyddon

If the battles or even some of them were fought within the Roman Walls and the enemy on some of the occasions was the Saxon, then they can be definitely ascribed to the last quarter of the 6th Century AD. This was the period of Saxon expansion, when Bernicia, which was later to develop into Northumberland was extending its borders and coming into conflict with the Britons of this region.

The Britons who opposed them were the Kings of the North. They ruled several small Kingdoms in the land between the two Roman Walls. The Antonine Wall in the North running between the Forth and the Clyde and in the South Hadrians Wall running between the Tyne and the Solway Firth.

I repeat therefore, if the battles were fought in this region and some definitely were, and the enemy was the Saxon, then the period of the battles was definitely the last quarter of the 6th Century AD, and The Kings of the Britons referred to by Nennius must therefore be the Kings of the North.

Remember Nennius says “Then in those days, Arthur fought against them with the Kings of the Britons, but he was a commander in the battles”.

Nennius does not call Arthur a King, but rather a commander, and says there were many more noble than he.

Was there therefore an Arthur of this region and of this period of time who was an ally of these Britons? and who could have conceivably been their ‘Dux Bellorum’. I believe we can prove that there was an Arthur in this region between the Roman Walls who was an ally of the Kings of the Britons at precisely this time in history, as we shall see in a further chapter.

The main points to remember are:

1 Many of the battles can be located in Southern Scotland or Northern England, between the Roman Walls, nowhere near Cornwall, the West Country of England or Wales.

2 This is exactly the location you would expect if the battles involved on one side the Saxons and on the other Arthur and the British Kings of the North.

3 The entire list of battles is probably all that remains of an old British battle poem and includes at least two which do not fit in with the rest, and were most likely added in the course of the centuries between the events described and them being written down in their present form. These are The Battle of the City of Legions and The Battle of Badon.

4 It is of no consequence whether the list of battles described in Nennius actually occurred or not, our argument for an historical Arthur does not depend on them, they are included in this book as another example, to show the reader that if genuine then they point to localities in the North, to the land between the two Roman Walls, where the protagonists would undoubtedly be Arthur and the Britons on one side and the Pagan Saxon and Picts on the other.

5 There is no way we can prove that the majority of the battles were real and no way we can locate all the sites.

What we can safely say without fear of contradiction, is that some, if real, can definitely be located in the land between the two Roman Walls, in what the Welsh called The North. We can also assume that this being the case then the others if real were fought in the same region. Why? Firstly the land between the two Roman Walls was a domain separate from the rest of Britain. There is no historical evidence that the Kings of this region fought outside this region, but certainly evidence that they united to fight against the Pagan Saxons and Picts within this area.

Secondly there was no paramount King of Britain who would be required to fight in far flung regions in an attempt to hold the entire country together at this period in history.

The country had split into many and various tiny kingdoms.

The Anglo Saxons were firmly entrenched down the Eastern half of England, many of their cemeteries dating from 450 AD and located well within the Eastern half of England are now being found.

In the Western half of England South of Hadrians Wall several British Kingdoms had evolved, and so the picture painted by some of an overall King speeding from one battle in Scotland down to another in the middle or South of England to fight the invading Saxons seems more and more unlikely, when the Saxons in the East of England, South of Hadrians Wall, far from invading England were in fact at this time, that is the 6th Century, already well established.

Some in fact have painted a picture of Arthur with his mounted troop attacking the invading Saxons as they try valiantly to land on shore from their nearby anchored ships. It seems nothing could be further from reality.

By the time of Arthur the Saxons were well established in the East of England, and if Arthur was not a supreme ruler of Britain, which as we have explained he was not, because the country was divided into numerous kingdoms, then his influence must have been only in a limited region, and as we can prove an historical Arthur lived and fought in this region called the North, and as we have explained the battles can most certainly be located there, and as the Saxons of Bernicia were extending their borders and coming into conflict with the Britons of the North, then it is to this region and this period of time, that is the last quarter of the 6th Century that the battles can logically be assigned.

The Nennius manuscript mentions Arthur once more in the following passage:

“ For Arthur proceeded to Jerusalem and there made a cross to the size of the Saviour’s cross and there it was consecrated and for three successive days he fasted, watched and prayed, before the Lords cross, that the Lord would give him the victory, by this sign, over the heathen, which also took place, and he took with him the image of St.Mary, the fragments of which are still preserved in great veneration at Wedale, in English Wodale, in

Latin Vallis Doloris. Wodale is a village in the province of Lodonesia, but now of the jurisdiction of the Bishop of St.Andrew's of Scotland, six miles on the West of that hereto noble and eminent monastery of Meilros".

Meilros is of course Melrose, and it and Lodonesia are both situated in the land lying between the two Roman Walls, which points us once more to the North. This being the case it seems unnecessary to point out that if Arthur was fighting in the North and this seems clear from the previous passage, and the enemy was the Saxon, then the period meant must be the last quarter of the 6th Century AD, which was the period of Saxon expansion and conflict in the North.

One final point, Nennius describes the second, third, fourth and fifth battles being fought on the river Dubglas in the region of Linnius.

Most observers think Linnius means Lindsey which is situated in Lincolnshire. This to me seems to be too far from the North. A more likely explanation may be that Nennius, or a Norman French reviser, was using the Old French or Breton word used to describe Lothian that being Loenois or Leonais or perhaps a phonetic equivalent of one of these, or possibly a corruption of them.

Another source often quoted as evidence of Arthur is the Annals Cambriae - or Annals of Wales.

THE ANNALS OF CAMBRIAE

- OR THE ANNALS OF WALES

Year 72 (AD 518) The Battle of Badon in which Arthur bore the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ on his shoulders for three days and three nights and the Britons were victorious.

Year 93 (AD 539) Battle of Camlann in which Arthur and Medraut perished and there was plague in Britain and Ireland.

These Annals were composed in Wales and were dated from the year they were begun and not Anno Domini. This is supposedly the reason for the variation in the dates.

It must of course always be remembered that the Annals were not compiled until the 11th Century, several hundred years after the events they describe.

The Annals were only kept as a contemporary record from around the year 800 and the spelling in the earlier sections indicate this, they are therefore unreliable as evidence for reconstructing 6th Century history.

The monk responsible for the two entries at the beginning of this chapter, that is the Battle of Badon and the Battle of Camlann did not write it at the time the events described occurred. The entries were in fact made centuries later.

The Battle of Badon was indeed a real battle. It was fought between the Britons and the Saxons, it is believed, outside the town of Bath, it resulted in the temporary halting of the Saxon advance across what is now South West England.

However, the Monk Gildas on whose evidence the earliest accounts of the 5th and 6th centuries rests, makes no mention of Arthur being present at the Battle of Badon. So we can safely say there is no historical evidence for Arthur's connection with the Battle of Badon, and this insertion was made by a monk influenced by legendary accounts of Arthur and the battle. The compiler simply credited the victory to Arthur while filling in the legendary details regarding the cross Arthur carried on his shoulders for three days and three nights.

In the account of the twelve battles fought by Arthur in the Nennius history, the twelfth is given as the Battle of Badon, as we have just explained there is no historical evidence for this assertion.

So it seems safe to say:

1 There was a Battle of Badon

2 Arthur was not present and took no part

The second entry we are concerned with here is the one for the Battle of Camlann in which Arthur and Medraut perished.

Medraut of course being Modred, the name he is best known by.

The Battle of Camlann, like the Battle of Badon, we believe to have been a real battle, but it was not fought in 539 AD as the Annals state or 542 AD as Geoffrey of Monmouth states.

When the monk responsible for the entry of the Battle of Camlann entered it in the Annals, it seems more than likely that he was influenced by the date given by Geoffrey of Monmouth that is 542 AD, and again this date is not supported by any historical evidence.

The real date I believe was in fact 582 AD or 583 AD, and the reason for this will become evident shortly.

According to Arthurian legend Modred was the son of Lot, the King of the Picts, therefore Modred was a Pict. His domain and indeed his father's domain must therefore have been in what we now term Scotland, as this was the homeland of the Picts.

I believe we can prove who Lot was, and also that he thrived during the second half of the 6th Century AD, as presumably did his son Modred or Medraut.

Researchers while giving some credibility to the Annals and the Battle of Camlann, always ignore the fact, that if Modred was a Pict then the battle would almost certainly have been fought in Scotland.

As we shall see later I believe we can apply an accurate date to the Battle of Camlann, where Arthur and Medraut perished, using reliable sources, and also a definite location.

It is interesting to note that some historians believe the Annals of Wales to provide the only factual evidence of Arthur's existence, as we shall see this is definitely not the case.

As one final example to prove the accounts in the Annals are not contemporary, the entry for the year 573 AD states:

" The Battle of Arderydd, between the sons of Elifer and Gwenddlau the son of Ceidio in which battle Gwenddlau was killed and Merlin was driven mad".
As the earliest form of Merlin was in fact Myrddin and the name was supposedly

unchanged until the 12th Century when it was altered by Geoffrey of Monmouth, it is reasonable to assume that this is a very late entry indeed in the Annals, there seems every reason to believe the entry regarding Arthur is also late, and certainly post Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The mystery of Arthur could perhaps have been solved or rather would not have been created if a 6th Century AD monk called Gildas had only mentioned him in his history.

GILDAS

THE EARLIEST BRITISH HISTORIAN

Gildas was a 6th Century monk who was responsible for writing a very brief historical outline of the time before his birth and the fifty or so years that followed. It is estimated that his history was composed somewhere around the middle of the 6th Century AD.

He tells the traditional story of how a British King, and remember there were several reigning in different regions, requested help from the Saxons in the wars against the Picts and the Scots, thereby allowing the Saxons a foothold in the country.

He goes on to tell how a British leader Ambrosius Aurelianus fought and defeated the Saxons, and gave the Britons a temporary respite.

Gildas describes Ambrosius as a modest man who of all the Roman nation was then alone in the confusion of this troubled period.

Gildas no doubt meant Ambrosius was of Roman descent, as several of these British Kings were.

He goes on to say that there were several contests between the Britons and the Saxons culminating in the Battle of Badon Hill which by his account seems to have been a bloody battle.

The Battle of Badon Hill seems to have occurred somewhere around the year 500 AD, although the Annals of Wales give the date as 518 AD but of course it must always be remembered these Annals were composed centuries after the events they describe.

Gildas then goes on to castigate five British Kings in his narrative. These Kings all lived at the time of his writing, that is around the middle of the 6th Century AD.

This of course left a gap of almost half a century of history of which nothing was known (that is between 500 AD and 550 AD approximately) and as we have seen, this gap was exploited to the full by Geoffrey of Monmouth who wrote a supposed ‘History of the Kings of Britain’.

The five Kings of the Britons described by Gildas all lived in the region of Devon, Cornwall and Wales, he never mentions the land between the Roman Walls, although we know there were many British Kingdoms in this region.

The first King described is Constantine, he was King of Dumnonia, which comprised the counties of Devon and Cornwall. Gildas castigates him for his wickedness, as he does the other Kings, and also for his killing of two royal youths.

Who these two royal youths are, we are never told, but this did not stop Geoffrey of Monmouth in his 'history' from calling them the sons of Modred, as we have seen Geoffrey was an expert at weaving into his supposed 'history' real characters, to suit his purpose.

The second King is Aurelius Conanus, who was thought to have been the King of Powisland.

The third, Vortipore, was King of the Demetians, who inhabited Cardigan, Pembroke, and Carmarthen.

Next was Cuneglasse whose dominion was said to be between the Severn and the West Coast.

Lastly came Maglocune also known as Maelgwn, he was King of Gwynedd, North Wales, this briefly was the history of Gildas, which was itself only brief.

The main points to remember are:

1 The history of Gildas leaves blank roughly the period between 500 AD and 550 AD.

2 When St.Bede wrote his history around the beginning of the 8th Century, he used Gildas as his reference for early British history, so he too left this period blank.

3 Gildas never mentions Arthur, which has led some to believe that Arthur did not exist. However, it seems likely that Gildas would only have mentioned Arthur if firstly, Arthur had belonged to the regions Gildas writes of, namely Cornwall and Wales, and secondly if Arthur belonged to the period in time of which Gildas was writing.

It seems therefore likely that Arthur did not belong to these regions or to this time in history.

The gap of fifty or so years left in the history of Gildas between 500 and 550 AD approximately was fully exploited by Geoffrey of Monmouth and gave him the opportunity when he wrote his History of the Kings of Britain around 1136 AD, to fill the void with his fanciful and completely false story of King Arthur, simply by using the story and tales of Arthur, well known amongst the Celtic population, and projecting Arthur the warrior into his 'history' as a full blown King, while elaborating and embroidering the truth beyond belief.

By using Arthur for this period, that is between 500 AD and 550 AD approximately, he had no choice but to make Arthur's demise before 550 AD, therefore, as I have previously

stated, I believe it was Geoffrey who chose 542 AD as the date of Arthur's demise and the Battle of Camlann.

Geoffrey had little choice, a later date would have meant his fictional Arthur encroaching on known history.

Geoffrey had stated that Arthur on his death bed had handed his Kingdom over to Constantine, and as we know from Gildas that Constantine was alive and well around the middle of the 6th Century, then he had to make Arthur's death before this time.

The only leeway would be a couple of years either side of the date which I believe he and he alone finally chose, that is 542 AD. He could not use the real date, which I believe for good reason to be 582 AD otherwise it would have made a nonsense of his 'history'. This point has already been made but it is worth mentioning again and again.

As we have said, Gildas never mentions Arthur, which leads me to believe that Arthur lived after this time and lived in a region which Gildas did not include in his very brief history.

I think both points are valid, Arthur as I hope to prove, lived in the second half of the 6th Century, after Gildas had written his history, and lived and fought in a region well removed from Wales, Cornwall, and the West Country of England. It was only the Kings of these regions that Gildas wrote of. He never mentioned the British Kingdoms of the North, between the two Roman Walls, where I believe Arthur and the thirteen Kings of the North lived and fought the Saxons, the Picts, and each other.

THE KINGS OF THE NORTH

The only evidence we have of British Kings uniting in the face of a common enemy, is during the 6th Century AD, when the British Kings who reigned in the land between the Roman Walls, that is between the Antonine Wall and Hadrians, formed a united front to fight the encroaching Saxons. There is no evidence of this happening at any other time during the 6th Century, or indeed during the 5th Century.

The only other occasion something similar occurred was described by the Monk Gildas when he outlined how Ambrosius Aurelianus led his countrymen (the Britons) in their wars against the Saxon.

Gildas does not state that Ambrosius led a confederation of Kings but suggests rather that he was supported by the British people.

He describes the situation thus “The poor remnants of our nation (to whom flocked from divers places round about our miserable countrymen as fast as bees to their hives, for fear of an ensuing storm) being strengthened by God, calling upon him with all their hearts, that they might not be brought to utter destruction, took arms under the conduct of Ambrosius Aurelianus”.

Gildas nowhere mentions a force of British Kings of any description, supporting Ambrosius, only a uniting of the people.

It is this fact which suggests that when Nennius in his history talks of Arthur leading the Kings of the Britons, it is not this earlier period in history he is referring to but rather to the 6th Century, and the period when the Kings of the Britons in the North united to fight the Saxon.

These Kings were known in Welsh tradition as the Thirteen kings of the North, the North referred to was the land lying between the two Roman Walls, the Antonine Wall running between the River Forth and the River Clyde, and Hadrians Wall running between the River Tyne and the Solway Firth.

Some were Christian, some pagan and probably some semi-pagan.

To some their era is remembered as the British Heroic age, when these Kings each with their own bard or druid who preserved in verse the deeds of their own particular patron, fought with the Saxon, the Pict and often with each other.

The druid Myrddin (Merlin) was the bard of the pagan British King Gwenddlau, slain at the Battle of Arderydd 573 AD.

Taliesin was the bard of Urien King of Rheged or Gore.

This was the period when Anuerin wrote the epic poem 'Goddodin', which told of the British King at Din Eidyn (Edinburgh) sending his forces against the Saxon. Anuerin himself and two others being the only survivors of this British force.

Another important British King of the North at this time reigned at the rock of Alclut which is now Dumbarton, his name was Ryderrch or Roderc.

Perhaps most important of all was the King who was said to eventually be the King of many domains, his name was Aidan son of Gabran, King of the Scots of Dalriada which corresponded to modern Argyle, and he seems to have assumed the role of 'Dux Brittanorum' or leader of the Britons.

In the last quarter of the 6th Century most of the Kings of the North were united under the umbrella of Christianity, but some were still Pagan and eventually a struggle ensued between the two parties, Christian and pagan.

At the Battle of Arderydd around 573 AD the pagans were defeated by a confederation of Christian British Kings, most important among them was Ryderrch of Dumbarton, Urien of Rheged and Aidan who was soon to become King of the Scots.

It seems that from around this period the Scots and the Britons of the North formed an alliance, uniting under a Christian banner to fight the pagans whether they be Saxon, Pict or Briton, these were I believe the Kings of the Britons who took part in the battles described by Nennius in his account of the British Kings led by Arthur.

Nennius also gives us a brief description of the British Kings of the North uniting when he says:

"Hussa (King of Saxons of Bernicia) reigned sevens years. Against him fought four Kings, Urien, Ryderthen (Ryderrch), Guallauc, and Morcant.

Theodoric fought bravely (together with his sons) against that Urien".
(Theodoric reigned 580 to 587 AD).

Nennius continues:

"But at that time sometimes the enemy and sometimes our countrymen were defeated, and he shut them up three days and three nights in the island of Metcaut, and while he was on an expedition he was murdered (Urien) at the instance of Morcant out of envy, because he possessed so much superiority over all the Kings in military science".

Although not mentioned specifically by name in this passage by Nennius we know that these British Kings were aided in their wars with the Saxon by the King who became the most powerful amongst these Kings of the North, this was King Aidan MacGabran, King of the Scots of Dalriada and many other domains. Aidan seems to have set himself up as the Dux Brittanorum or leader of the Britons. Although Aidan does not seem to have taken part in later battles himself and indeed seems to have left the actual campaigning to his sons, he nevertheless aided the Britons in their wars against the Saxons, until around the year 603 AD when an army composed of Scots and Britons sent by Aidan to fight the Saxons, was defeated at Degsaston.

As we have stated this is the only time that British Kings are said to have united and it is against the Saxons of Bernicia, in the last quarter of the 6th Century, and it is the region lying between the two Roman Walls in the land known as the 'North'.

We know that the earliest Welsh literature is not from Wales but in fact comes from the North. This literature describes Kings of the North and events which occurred in the North. We know these British Kings of the North united to fight the Saxon.

We also know that at precisely this time and in that land, the North, there was a leader called Arturius who was in fact, beyond any doubt, an ally of these British Kings, who was in a position, while not actually a King, to lead the confederation of united British Kings of the North.

Also, as we have already illustrated, not only does Nennius describe the Kings of the Britons and Arthur fighting the Saxon, but in a further passage he actually names four Kings of the Britons (all Kings of the North) campaigning against the Saxon. These being Urien, Ryderrch, Guallauc and Morcant.

There seems no reason to suppose that the description of the British Kings and Arthur in the Nennius manuscript, is describing earlier events than those recorded in the earliest Welsh literature, which is in fact the literature of the North, and which describes events which occurred in the second half of the 6th Century AD.

WELSH LITERATURE

'THE LITERATURE OF THE NORTH'

The oldest Literature of Wales, belongs not to Wales but in fact belongs to the North, to the land between the two Roman Walls.

This land was inhabited by the Ancient Britons, of which race the Welsh are a part. The Britons inhabited the whole region from the River Clyde and River Forth in Scotland all the way down the West Coast of England to Wales and Cornwall, and of course the one language was spoken throughout this area, someone from the Clyde region could speak and be understood in the Valleys of Wales or at Lands End in Cornwall.

On the East Coast several Saxon Kingdoms were emerging and the ones which were probably the most dangerous to the Britons at this particular time, that is the second half of the 6th Century AD, were Bernicia and Deira. These two Kingdoms would eventually unite to become Northumberland. As they spread their influence and their borders, they came into conflict with the British Kings of the North, in the land between the two Roman Walls.

The bards of these Kings of the North were the composers of what is claimed to be the earliest Welsh literature.

Taliesin was the bard of King Urien of Rheged and also the composer of poems regarding Urien's son Owain.

Anuerin, another bard of the North, wrote an epic poem 'Goddodin' which described how a King of Caer Eidyn (Edinburgh) known as Mynyddawg Mwynfawr (Wealthy) sent 300 of his best men to fight the Saxon, only three returning.

Myrddin who was later to be known as Merlin, wrote also of the North and from the Black Book of Carmarthen there is a series of Stanzas in which Myrddin greets the apple tree in the wood of
Celyddon. Much of the Myrddin story is contained in this poem, which mentions Rydderch (another of the Kings of the North) and Gwenddydd (Myrddin's sister).

This early Welsh literature as we can see, belonged to the North. The reason it became preserved in Wales was that in the year 655 AD the Britons were defeated by Oswy, King of Northumbria, who drove a wedge between the Britons of the North and the Britons of Wales and the South, and from this time the home of British literature, which was almost exclusively Northern, would be Wales, but as we have seen it really belonged to the North, to Y Gogled the land between the two Roman Walls.

It is plain to see that the fame of any particular King would depend on his bard and his ability to reflect the King's deeds in his poems.

This would seem to be the case with King Urien and his son Owain who's lasting fame is due in no small amount to the bard Taliesin and his poetic compositions. In return for this work the King would be expected to cherish and protect his bard who would perhaps be the most important member of the King's household.

It is worth mentioning here that the account of Arthur's twelve battles in the Nennius manuscript, may in fact be a composition by some unknown bard, who sang the praises of his patron. Be that as it may, the fact remains that all the earliest Welsh literature of the second half of the 6th Century depicts Kings and describes events connected exclusively with Y Gogled - the North, the land between the two Roman Walls - this being the case it suggests that if the literature concerning Arthur's twelve battles in the Nennius manuscript is genuinely from the 6th Century then this too will most likely be describing events in the North.

Because nowhere in the earliest Welsh literature of the 6th Century are Kings of the South, Wales, or Cornwall described, but rather only the Kings and the events of the North, exclusively the North, the land between the two Roman Walls.

WELSH LITERATURE - II

There are several Welsh poems which mention Arthur.
One of these connects him with one of the Roman Walls.

Now it is of little or no consequence with which sites these poems connect Arthur, except where they can be supported by historical evidence, and this is definitely the case in the poems regarding Arthur and the Roman Wall. When backed by historical evidence these poems take on a new significance.

For example, in one poem from the Book of Taliesin which refers to Arthur and his assault over the Wall and of his being amongst the retinue of the Wall, and of him leading horses supporting burdens, it would seem to describe a campaign beyond the Roman Wall.

The Kingdom of Manann which we will later show, Arturius was holding for his father, was bisected by the Antonine Roman Wall, and he in fact led a campaign against the Picts, (perhaps several campaigns), who dwelt in the region north of this Roman Wall.

Immediately, we then realise the poem could be describing actual historical events, and that is why it takes on a new significance. Because it matters not if a hundred poems connect Arthur with as many different regions, but if one can be supported by actual historical evidence it sets it apart from the rest.

Arthur is also called the 'Guledig' the Welsh for leader, and not King.

Whatever the meaning of the poem, it undoubtedly connects Arthur with the Roman Wall and we can in fact prove Arturius was connected with the Roman Wall which crossed the Kingdom of Manann.

Before we discuss the evidence of a historical Arthur, it must be pointed out that the evidence of Wales is of no consequence to us. Whether there is any truth in the Welsh legends and poems, whether the battles of Nennius are genuine or not, none of this is required for evidence of an historical Arthur, they are merely mentioned in this book to prove that if any of it can be judged to be genuine, then it points to the North as the source of the Arthurian legends, however, as evidence it is not required.

Not the Welsh tradition, not Nennius, not the Mabinogion, not Geoffrey of Monmouth, not the Annals of Wales, not anything previously regarded as evidence of Arthur's existence, none of this is required.

The evidence has always been available but it was never in the South, it was always in the North, and it is to the North that we must travel to find another important figure in the legend ——- the wizard Merlin.

MERLIN - MYRDDIN

The character of Merlin is based on a real bard or druid of the late 6th Century AD, known to history as Myrddin.

In the Annals of Wales the entry for the year 573 AD reads:

‘Annus Bellum erderit inter filios Elifer et Guendoleu filium keidiau in quo bello guendoleu cecidit Merlinus insanus effectus est’

This translated means:

‘The year (573) the Battle of Arderydd between the sons of Elifer and Gwenddlau the son of Ceidio, in which battle Gwenddlau was killed, Merlin was driven mad’.

The name Arderydd has developed into a more modern Arthuret, it is situated in North West England just North of Carlisle.

The Battle of Arderydd really did take place around the year 573 AD and there really was a Merlin. The Battle was fought between rival British Kingdoms. On one side were the Christian British and on the other the Pagan British. The Christians were the victors and Myrddin (who was later to be known as Merlin) and his patron Gwenddlau the Pagan Prince, were the vanquished.

The Confederation of British Christian Kings seemingly included King Ryderrch of Dumbarton and King Urien of Rheged or Gore as he is termed in the Arthurian legends. Also on the side of the Christian British was King Aidan MacGabran. Aidan was a Scot on his father’s side, but it is thought that his mother was British, and possibly his wife was British too.

Myrddin seems to have been a druid or bard who had attached himself to the court of Gwenddlau, a Pagan Prince of one of the many small Kingdoms which comprised the region lying between the two Roman Walls, the Antonine in the North and Hadrians in the South. This region was known to the Romans as the province of Valentia, and as we have said to the Welsh as ‘Y Gogled’ or the North.

Of the poems which have been attributed to Myrddin (Merlin) this one from the Black Book of Carmarthen contains some of the Myrddin story, in it Myrddin greets an apple tree in the Forest of Celyddon which lay in the North where he hid after the battle of Arderydd.

"Sweet apple tree that grows in the glade.

It is its attributes that hide it from the lords of Ryderrch.

There was a press round its stem and men all about it.

It was their treasure the valiant hosts.

Now Gwenddydd loves me not, gives me no greeting.

It was my hand slew her son and her daughter.

I am hated of Gwasaug, Rhydderch's champion.

Death bears off all, why will he give me no greeting.

And after Gwenddolau there is no lord to honour me.

Play cannot please me, paramour visits me not.

And in the day of Arderydd golden was my torque.

Though I have no worth for the swan white maiden."

This poem explains the plight of Myrddin, his protector the Prince Gwenddolau has been slain at the Battle of Arderydd.

Merlin himself has been responsible for the death of his sister's son and daughter.

He is hunted by King Ryderrch, the victor of Arderydd and therefore must hide in the forest of Celyddon, alone and friendless.

Myrddin was supposedly driven mad after the Battle of Arderydd, and if the poem is a true description of his plight, then it is really no surprise that he was.

Myrddin is also mentioned in a 12th Century Life of St Kentigern, where he is called Lailoken. He is taken prisoner by a chief called Meldred and held at his fort at Dunmeller.

In another Life of Kentigern it states that "at the court of Rhydderch Hael a certain idiot named Laloicen uttered predictions". If this was the case, he must eventually have been under the protection of Ryderrch.

In the Scotochronicon it states that Laloicen or Lailoken was Myrddin Wyllt.

So it seems that Laloicen or Lailoken was Myrddin, and that he uttered predictions, which presumably were the ravings of a disturbed mind.

The name Myrddin itself was thought to have been changed to Merlin by Geoffrey of Monmouth (because he believed Myrddin to be too similar to the French word 'Merde'),

when he wrote his ‘History of the Kings of Britain’, but whatever the reason for the change Myrddin would forever be called Merlin.

In this ‘history’ Geoffrey not only changed Myrddin’s name to Merlin but he also moved him forward in time almost a hundred years, from the last quarter of the 6th Century to somewhere around the year 500 AD, not only this, he also moved him from the North to the South.

Although largely a fanciful piece of historical fiction, it was nevertheless due to this fictional history that Merlin and Arthur first became attached to South West England. As we have seen Merlin came from the North and this posed the question could Arthur have also done the same?

Geoffrey merely placed the characters in his history in the Celtic regions he was familiar with, those being Cornwall and Wales.

The main points to remember are:

1 Merlin was based on a real person called Myrddin, he really existed.

2 He lived in the second half of the 6th Century not the first half.

3 After the Battle of Arderydd he lived in the wood of Celyddon, which lay between the Roman Walls in what we now call Southern Scotland and Northern England.

4 He lived nowhere near Wales or Cornwall, the regions his name later became attached too, through Geoffrey of Monmouth’s ‘history’.

5 Merlin lived in the second half of the 6th Century, Geoffrey in his ‘history’ had placed him around the year 500 AD, if he could misplace Merlin, no doubt he could do the same with Arthur, if it suited his purpose. In fact I am certain he made Arthur’s death forty years earlier than the time he actually died, and hope to prove that Arthur’s demise was actually 582 AD and not as Geoffrey states, 542 AD.

After the Battle of Arderydd, Merlin wandered in the forest of Celyddon, hunted by his enemies, mainly King Ryderrch of Alclut (Dumbarton).

Although, eventually, Merlin was accepted by Ryderrch and was placed under his protection.

Kind Ryderrch was one of the thirteen Kings of the North, could Arthur have lived in this region too?

Could he have been an ally of Ryderrch? If so he would certainly have come into contact with Merlin. Although I am not suggesting in any way that there was a court, but if the answer to the questions posed is yes, then there is every possibility that they were acquainted, we shall see further on.

CONSTANTINE

Constantine was the King of Dumnonia, a region which consisted of the modern counties of Cornwall and Devon.

He is mentioned as we have seen, by the first British Historian, the monk Gildas, who writes of him killing two Royal youths.

A point seized on by Geoffrey of Monmouth when he wrote his History of the Kings of Britain.

It made an ideal ending for Geoffrey's narrative regarding Arthur, he simply explained that Arthur on his death bed had handed his Kingdom over to Constantine, Geoffrey then further explained that the two Royal youths Constantine killed were in fact the sons of Modred (Arthur's opponent in his final fatal battle).

A brilliant finish to a story by any standards, a remarkable mixture of fable, fantasy and truth.

We have it on the authority of the monk Gildas that Constantine had killed two Royal youths, so why not make them the sons of Modred? It tied up all the loose ends, Arthur dies, Constantine inherits the throne, Modred's progeny are wiped out.

We know it could not have happened thus. Firstly there was no supreme King of Britain, as Geoffrey describes Arthur, but rather numerous Kings of tiny Kingdoms.

Gildas never mentions Arthur which he surely would have if Arthur had lived alongside Constantine and the other Kings mentioned.

However, at the end of Geoffrey's 'history', Geoffrey describes how Arthur handed his Kingdom to Constantine, no doubt this is mainly fantasy but it may just contain a germ of truth.

Arthur was never King of a united Britain but was I believe in control of one small Kingdom in North Britain in the land between the two Roman Walls. He was however, I believe, the leader in battle of the united Christian British Kingdoms of the North, the 'Dux Bellorum' or leader in battle, as he is described in the history of 'Nennius'.

It is possible that Arthur and Constantine met, not in Southern Britain but in the North, this we can prove from the scant evidence available.

As we have said, Constantine was definitely a King around the middle of the 6th Century AD in Cornwall, but he evidently gave up his crown and became a monk, whether because

of the encroaching Saxons or whether due to a genuine vocation we do not know. What is certain is that he first travelled to Ireland and after a period of time crossed the sea to the North of Britain, to exactly the region where Arthur dwelled and at around the time in history when the real Arthur lived, that is the second half of the 6th Century AD.

As we shall see in a later chapter there can be no doubt that these being the circumstances, Constantine and Arthur may have met and perhaps Constantine for reasons we will explain, may have been thought to have been present at Arthur's death.

It may possibly be this dimly remembered fact that led Geoffrey of Monmouth to choose Constantine over the other four Kings mentioned in Gildas' history, to be the one to inherit Arthur's Kingdom.

MODRED AND KING LOT

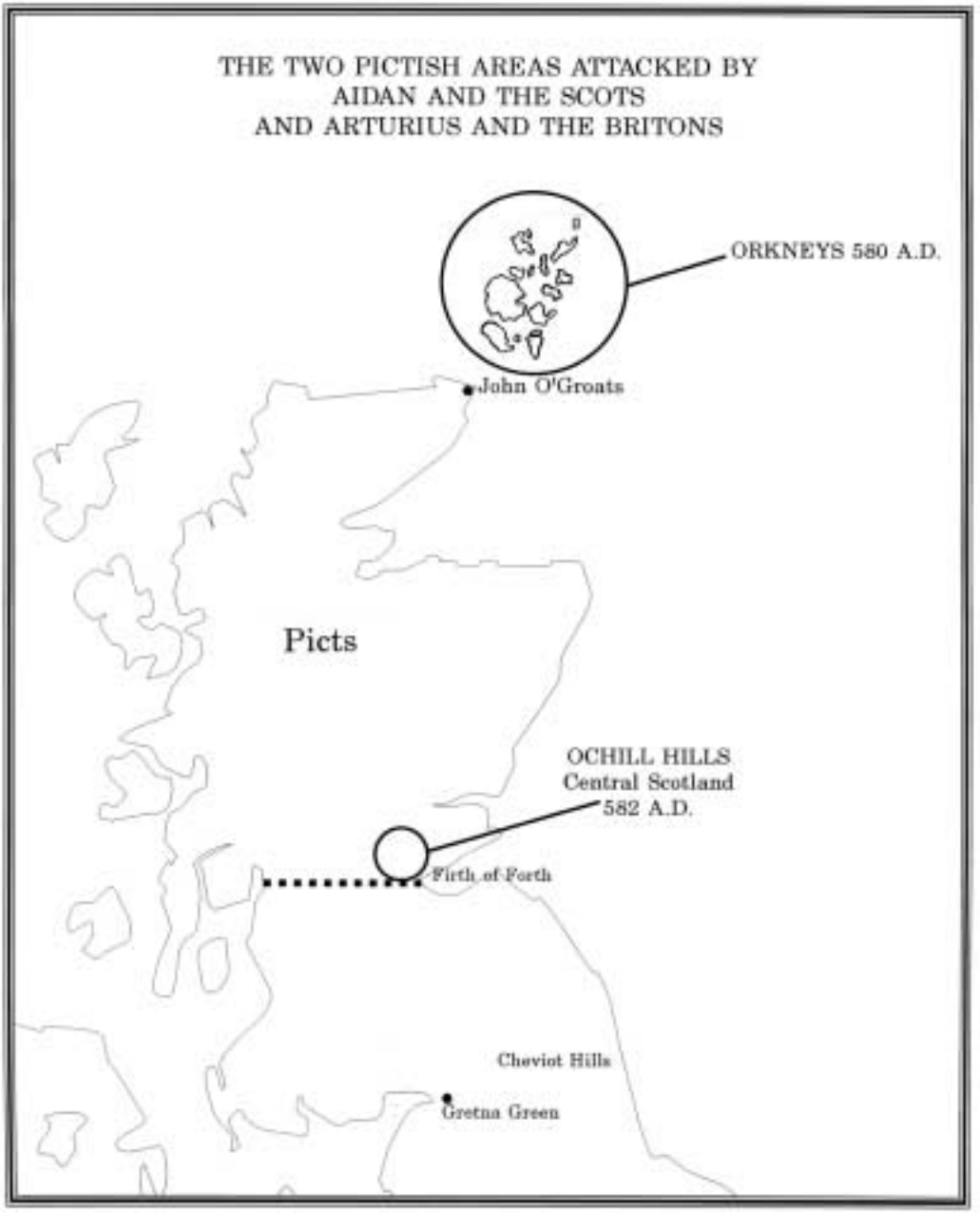
In the Arthurian romances, Medraut has developed into Modred, same person different spelling. This is in no-way unusual because, as well as a name developing a different spelling over the centuries, each region, that is of the Scots, the Welsh, the Saxons, all had a different spelling for the same place or person.

Hence we find the Welsh calling the son of King Lot Medraut, while the Scots seem to have called him Moldreid or Meldred.

In the Chronicles of the Scots and Picts, he is called Moldreid, son of Lot of Lowdianis, and he is Arthur's opponent.

While In a Life of St Kentigern he is termed Meldred, and is responsible for imprisoning Myrddin (Merlin) in his fortress at Dunmeller. No doubt this is legend but it is interesting that it connects Meldred with Myrddin who lived in Scotland in the last quarter of the 6th Century AD, whereas according to Welsh legend and Geoffrey of Monmouth, Medraut or Modred died in 542 or 539 AD in the last battle with Arthur. However, we know that Myrddin and Modred were characters from the North, so if there is any truth in any of the legends, the Northern ones are more likely to contain any germ of truth there may be.

Whether or not there really was a Medraut or Modred, or Moldreid, we may never know, because evidence is not available. However, there is often a grain of truth in most legends and he may well have been a Pictish Prince —— the son of King Lot —— The King of the Picts.


THE TWO PICTISH AREAS ATTACKED BY
AIDAN AND THE SCOTS
AND ARTURIUS AND THE BRITONS
ORKNEYS 580 A.D.
John O'Groats
Picts
OCHILL HILLS
Central Scotland
582 A.D.
Firth of Forth
Cheviot Hills
Gretna Green

KING LOT

KING OF THE PICTS, OF ORKNEY AND LOTHIAN

King Lot is termed in the Arthurian Romances, the King of the Picts of Orkney and Lothian. He could be the product of someone's creative imagination, but on the other hand, like so many legends, he could be based on a real historical figure, and I believe he is.

In the year 580 AD The Annals of Ulster record the death of King Cennalat, King of the Picts, and I believe there is every possibility that he is the original of King Lot, for reasons which I shall explain.

In the year 580 AD the supreme King of the Picts was King Brude, but according to the Regnal List he was forced to share his throne for one year with King Cennalat. No King would willingly share his throne with a rival and it seems likely that King Brude gave his consent for the Scots to attack King Cennalat in the Orkneys, because the Annals of Ulster also record that in the year 580 AD, as well as the death of Cennalat, it states that there was a Scots expedition against the Picts of the Orkneys. It is not impossible that Cennalat's death was a direct result of the Scots attack on the Orkneys.

The Annals of Ulster also record that in the year 582 AD the Scots also attacked the Picts in Southern Scotland, presumably as part of the same campaign. The Scots must have had the consent of King Brude to attack these Picts and he would not allow this unless it was to his advantage.

So by attacking the Picts of Orkney and of Southern Scotland, the Scots could have been relieving pressure on King Brude's Northern and Southern flanks. It seems likely that these Picts of Orkney and the South were the supporters of King Cennalat, so by allowing the Scots to attack them, he was weakening his rival Cennalat, in fact as the Annals of Ulster state, it seems to have led directly to the death of Cennalat in 580 AD.

If Cennalat's supporters were in the Orkneys and Southern Scotland, it is easy to see how the legends grew which regarded him as King of the Orkneys and Lothian.

The fact that Cennalat was in control of territory which was termed Lothian, which does not correspond to the boundaries of present day Lothian is of no consequence. The medieval writers of Arthurian legend often termed various parts of Central and south East Scotland as Lothian.

We have seen how Cennalat could have come to be regarded as King of the Orkneys and Lothian, but what about his name? after all it does not seem to resemble King Lot's.

The explanation is relatively simple. If we remember that the first part of his name, Cenna,

is simply the old Irish for head and is the equivalent of the Welsh 'Penn' also meaning head or chief.

If we remove the descriptive Cenna (head or chief) we are left with Lat. Lat would readily give us Lot. The name in its original form would make no sense to English or French readers. If you think this is all implausible, remember that the name Kenneth is the phonetic equivalent of Cainneth and that the earliest form of Urien is Urbgen. These are just two examples to illustrate how names can change, there are many more.

Perhaps the most important fact which points to the true identity of King Cennalat or Lot is that he lived at exactly the same period in history as Arturius, that being the second half of the 6th Century AD. He was therefore a contemporary of the real Arthur (Arturius).

Points to remember:

1 Brude must give consent for the Scots to attack Orkneys and Lothian.

2 Brude presumably would not consent to Scots attacking his friend, only his rival or enemy.

3 Cennalat was Brude's rival for the throne.

4 Therefore it seems Cennalat was King of, or at least supported by, the areas attacked by the Scots, these being Orkney and Lothian.

5 By dropping Cenna (head or chief) from Cennalat, later writers would leave us with Lat or Lot..

6 Lat or Lot is called in the Arthurian legends King of the Picts of Orkney and Lothian. The two areas attacked by Arturius and the Scots.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS
AND INTRODUCTION TO FINAL PART

At this point, before proceeding further, it is perhaps best to point out that anything which has been included in the text up to this point is not required as evidence of an historical Arthur.

Whether the reader agrees with the arguments raised by Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Welsh Literature, the battles of the Nennius manuscript, the explanation of King Lot's identity or Arthur's sword and spear, in fact anything that has been included up to this point, it does not matter. Because, none of this is required as proof of Arthur. The proof has always been there, but has always been ignored.

So great was the lasting impression made by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who portrayed Arthur as a Southern British King, that people would forever regard him as such.

The proof of Arthur or rather Arturius as the name was originally, is found in Adomnan's "Life of St Columba", written just one hundred years after Arthur's death. The proof however is not simply in the name, the proof is in fact, in an understanding of the role of Arthur, in the history of the time in which he lived, in the Kingdom in which he fought and died, of his contemporaries, of the role he was required to adopt in relation to his father the King. In fact in an understanding of the complete picture which can be composed by using the other reliable historical documents available.

Adomnan's "Life of Columba" is only the start, the proof of his existence, and from that starting point it is possible to go forward and to construct an outline, however brief, of the 'Age of Arthur'.

The first mention of Arturius in a reliable historical document is found in Adomnans "Life of St Columba".

ADOMNAN'S
'LIFE OF ST.COLUMBA'

Almost everyone who has researched the Arthurian legend has come to the conclusion that Wales has the most authoritative documents. That the only evidence for a real Arthur can be found here. It seems that nothing could be further from the truth.

The Annals of Wales which mention Arthur, were copied from various sources and the brief mention of Arthur, filled in centuries after his life time.

The literature and legends of Wales have been searched and re-searched over the centuries for clues to Arthur's existence, writers desperately look through the Welsh tales of the Mabinogion hoping to find a clue or even something that resembles a clue. No real historical evidence of Arthur has ever been found here, and the reason is obvious, Arthur was not a Welsh or Southern British leader, despite the fact that researchers continue to look there. Arthur was a Northern leader and proof of him is to be found in the literature of Scotland. Not a ghost figure or mythical King as in the literature of Wales. On the contrary, in literature belonging to the Scots he is mentioned as a Prince, a leader, a warrior, here we find him in black and white, no shadowy figure just glimpsed fleetingly behind some fantasy legend but rather a living breathing warrior.

Adomnan's "Life of St.Columba" is an almost contemporary account, written just over one hundred years after the events it describes somewhere near the end of the 7th Century AD and there is no-one who would dispute the authenticity of this document. Adomnan was a successor of St Columba at the monastery of Iona. His "Life of St. Columba" was an attempt to prove the sanctity of his predecessor. However, he also described people and events of the same period in history as the Saint, and it is here that we find the first mention of Arthur (Arturius).

The only question is can the Arthur or Arturius as he is called in the Life of St Columba, be one and the same as Arthur of legend. I believe the answer is a definite yes and believe we have enough evidence to prove this. However, this question shall be discussed in a further chapter.

To return to Adomnan, the following are passages taken from his book:

a) Concerning the Battle of the Miathi

At another time when the holy man was in the island of lo (Iona) after many years had gone by since the above mentioned battle, he suddenly said to his attendant "Strike the bell". Summoned by its clang, the brothers ran quickly to the church, the holy superior going before them.

He knelt down and addressed them there, "Now let us pray earnestly to the Lord for this people, and for the King Aidan. For in this hour they are going into battle." And after a short time he left the oratory, and looking into the sky he said, "Now the barbarians are turned to flight, and the victory is yielded to Aidan, unhappy though it is." Also the blessed man told prophetically the number of dead in Aidan's army, three hundred and three men.

b) A prophecy of Saint Columba concerning King Aidan's Sons

At another time before the above mentioned battle, the Saint questioned King Aidan about a successor to the Kingdom. When he answered that he did not know which of his three sons should reign Arturius or Echoid Find or Domingart, the Saint then spoke in this manner, "None of these three will be King, for they will all fall in battle, slain by enemies".

All these things were fulfilled afterwards in their time. For Arturius and Echoid Find were slain a little while later, in the Battle of the Maithi mentioned above. Domingart was killed in a rout of battle in England, and Echoid Buide succeeded to the Kingdom after his father.

The Miathi mentioned by Adomnan were a tribe of Picts who inhabited the land adjacent to Aidan's Kingdom of Manann in which was situated the Roman fortress of Camelot.

Their Southern border was most likely the River Forth, and Adomnan clearly states that Arthur (Arturius) and Echoid Find were slain in the Battle of the Miathi.

It is perhaps as well to remember that although Adomnan called it the Battle of the Miathi, the Britons may well have had a different name for it, indeed the Annals of Wales have called Arthur's last battle, the Battle of Camlann, and we hope to prove later that the Battle of the Maithi, could justifiably have been called the Battle of Camlann too, but more of this in a later chapter.

The Annals of Ulster give the date for the Battle of the Miathi (the Battle of Manann) as 582 AD.

It is worth noting that the Scots were one of the best documented peoples of the Dark Ages, due to the Irish/Scots monks recording of historical events, and much of Scotland's early history can be found in the Irish Annals.

So there we have it in black and white - Arturius - Arthur, mentioned in a reliable historical document. In fact this is the only evidence of an historical Arthur in a genuine

contemporary document, there is no other, not anywhere, not in Wales, not in South West England, not in Cornwall, not in Brittany, I repeat, not anywhere.

This Arturius is the only one mentioned anywhere in a document of this era and supported by the Annals of the Irish/Scots which record the early history of the Scots in North Britain.

None of the Welsh documents can match this, they are nowhere near contemporary records, they are copies of copies of annals begun centuries after the events they describe. The Annals of Wales were written in the 11th Century, the details of Arthur filled in from legendary accounts, whereas, Adomnan wrote about Arturius just one hundred years after his death. So there was never any need to search for clues of Arthur, the clues were there all the time, they just simply were not in the South they were in fact always in the North.

Arturius is the earliest spelling of the name, as the monks wrote in Latin they latinised the name by adding "ius".

Thus Artur became latinised to Arturius, the Irish Annals call him Artuir. The 'h' would be added at a later stage in the development of the name, as medieval writers added an 'h' between a vowel and a consonant thus Artur became Arthur.

c) *The Blessed man's prophecy concerning King Roderc, Tothal's Son, who reigned in the rock of Cloth (Clyde) (Dumbarton)*

At one time this King, since he was a friend of the holy man, sent Lugbe Mocu Min to him with a secret message, desiring to know if he should be slain by enemies, or not.

Then the Saint spoke, "He shall never be delivered into the hands of enemies, but he shall die on his own feather pillow, in his own house".

This prediction of the Saint concerning King Roderc was fully fulfilled. For according to the Saint's word he died in his own house, a peaceful death.

Roderc or Ryderrch was one of the thirteen British Kings of the North, his capital was Dumbarton Rock, the fact that he was a friend of Columba indicates that he was a friend and ally also of Aidan King of the Scots, and in fact they were members of the British Christian Party. It was this King Ryderrch who invited Myrddin (Merlin) to leave the Forest of Celydonn and to come under his protection.

d) *The Holy Man's prophecy concerning a certain layman, by name Gore, Aidan's Son*

Similarly at another time a certain layman, the strongest (or most valiant) of all the men of that time, among the people of the corcu-Reti, asked the Holy Man by what death he should be cut off. The Saint said to him, "You will die neither in battle, nor in sea, a companion of your journey, from whom you suspect nothing, will be the cause of your death". "Perhaps" said Gore "one of the friends that accompany me may have it in mind to kill me; or my wife, to contrive my death by magic art, for love of a younger man".

The Saint said, "It will not happen so", "Why" said Gore, "will you not tell me now about my slayer?" The Saint replied "I will not disclose anything to you more plainly now, about that baneful companion of yours, lest you be too greatly troubled by frequent remembrance of what you know".

In the Arthurian legends another of the British Christian Kings of the North named Urien is called Gore or the King of Gore.

Now, while King Aidan did not have a son called Gore, a possible explanation for the passage would be that Gore was a son-in-law of Aidan's. In the legends Urien of Gore is married to Morgan, Arthur's sister.

So to make any sense of the above passage from Adomnan, and to reconcile it with the Arthurian legends, Aidan would have to have a daughter called Morgan. If this was the case and she was in fact the wife of Urien of gore, the passage would make sense because Urien of Gore would then be Aidan's son-in-law.

Furthermore, in the passage from Adomnan, Gore is worried by his wife's possible attempts to kill him for love of another man, in the Arthurian legends Urien of Gore's wife Morgan is also trying to kill him, for love of another man, and in the Nennius manuscripts Urien is killed by a treacherous companion of his at the instigation of a jealous ally.

The resemblance of Urien of Gore in the legends and the Gore mentioned in Adomnan's Life of St Columba is uncanny.

Both are worried that their wife intends to kill them for love of another. Both were killed by a treacherous companion, and both could be Arthur's brother-in-law if we could prove Arthur had a sister called Morgan, perhaps we can.

However, whether the Gore of Adomnan's Life of Columba, and the Gore of legend are one and the same, makes no difference to the argument regarding an historical Arthur, it is mentioned here simply as an interesting point of discussion.

To make sense of the whole thing and to prove Gore in Adomnan is the same Urien of Gore in the legends (Arthurian), we must prove that Aidan did indeed have a daughter called Morgan, and that Morgan was indeed a real person, and not as previously supposed an

unreal figure based on the Irish Goddess Morrigen.

Urien was called King of Gore in Thomas Mallory's Arthurian legends, Mallory had used French sources. If he had used Welsh sources, Urien would be called King of Rheged.

If Urien was known as the King of Gore in Scotland, then this would suggest that stories of Arturius and Urien of Gore had passed directly to France from Scotland, and in Adomnan, Aidan's son (son-in-law) is called Gore.

There is evidence that trade was carried on between Scotland and Gaul (France) at this time, in fact in Adomnan's Life of Columba there is one section that describes a ship arriving from Gaul (France) at the main town of the region, that would be either the capital of Dalriada (Argyle) or the capital of Manau Goddodin, the other Scots controlled region, in what we now call Scotland.

We can safely say news of what was happening at this period in time, would be carried between Scotland and France and the tales of Arthur and his battles carried directly to France from Scotland, and not as previously supposed from Wales to Brittany and then to France proper. I am not suggesting that some Arthurian stories did not arrive in France by this route, but only that it is equally certain some arrived directly from Scotland. In fact we know that Scottish monks carried the gospel and, no doubt, tales of the political situation in Scotland throughout Europe as far away as Hungary. Also Scottish warriors for centuries filled the ranks of European armies and no doubt they too carried tales of Arthur and other heroes to the continent.

POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE NORTH

THE LOST PROVINCE OF VALENTIA

Around the year 80 AD the Roman Governor of Britain, Julius Agricola, in an attempt to subdue the tribes of what we now call Southern Scotland and Northern England, advanced from the Tyne Solway region as far as the Tay estuary in East Scotland. In the process Agricola passed through the territory of several “new tribes”.

These were the Damnonii of the Clyde Valley and Ayrshire, the Selgovae of the Central Lowlands and the Ottadini of East Lothian, Berwickshire and Northumberland.

In the year 82 AD Agricola also subdued the “Novantae” of Galloway.

The capitol or gathering place of the Ottadini was Traprain Law in East Lothian.

The capitol of the Selgovae was Eildon Hill.

The capitol of the Damnonii may have been Dumbarton while the centre of the Novantae region seems to have been the area around Loch Ryan.

Agricola was responsible for the building of a number of forts in Scotland, which had to be abandoned before 90 AD, as Roman troops were needed elsewhere in the Empire.

The great fort at Newstead on the Tweed was the exception, this was held perhaps a decade longer.

In the years that followed, the tribes of Southern Scotland mounted hostile raids into the province of Britain and this resulted in the building of Hadrians Wall, which became more or less the Northern boundary of the Roman province of Britain.

This however did not prove sufficient and around the year 142 AD the Emperor Antonine sent his legions to campaign beyond Hadrians Wall.

It was at this period that the second Roman Wall, known as the Antonine Wall, was built across Scotland, between the River Clyde on the West Coast and the River Forth on the East Coast. The Wall stood almost twenty feet in height, it was constructed of turf on a stone base, and was approximately fourteen feet wide. On the North side of the Wall was a ditch about twelve feet deep and forty feet wide. On the South side a road ran parallel with the wall.

Along the Antonine Wall forts were built at two mile intervals, and this became the Northern frontier of the Roman Province of Britain. However, around the year 211 AD after the campaigns of Severus, the Antonine Wall was abandoned and Hadrians Wall became once more the Northern boundary of the roman Province of Britain.

However, a Roman presence was kept in Southern Scotland until around the year 367 AD.

The legacy left by the Romans, the two great walls, formed a psychological as well as a physical barrier separating the tribes within this region from the Britons to the South of Hadrians Wall and also from the Picts to the North of the Antonine Wall.

No-one is suggesting that they did not have links with their kindred in Wales and the Western half of England, they obviously did, but only that the region developed with an identity of its own and was recognised as a separate entity by the rest of the country, this region would be remembered in Welsh tradition as ‘Y Gogled’ - The North, and in years to come as, the Lost Province of Valentia.

The tribes encountered by Agricola would develop into primitive separate states while sharing a common language.

The Damnonii tribal lands would evolve into the Kingdom of Strathclyde, ruled from Dumbarton Rock and the Novantae lands would become the Kingdom of Rheged, the name being retained in Dunragit in Galloway.

POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE NORTH

BETWEEN THE ROMAN WALLS

To appreciate the political situation in North Britain in 6th Century AD, at least that part which lay between the two Roman Walls, that is the Antonine in the North and Hadrians in the South, it is necessary to offer a brief description of the region.

The Antonine Wall marked the Northern boundary of this region and ran between the River Clyde in the West and the Firth of Forth in the East.

Hadrians Wall marked the Southern boundary and ran between the Solway Firth in the West and the River Tyne in the East.

The reader must realise that this region which today would comprise Southern Scotland and part of Northern England bears no resemblance politically to the same country in the 6th Century AD.

For example, the Scots who eventually gave their name to the whole of Scotland were confined for the most part to their small Kingdom of Dalriada, which would correspond roughly to the area we now call Argyle.

North of the River Forth were the Picts a confederation of tribes, normally held to be ruled by one supreme King, but also including a number of lesser Kings and Chiefs.

In the West, around the Clyde estuary and South of the River Clyde, were the ancient Britons in their various Kingdoms, the main two being Strathclyde with its capitol at Dumbarton Rock, and Rheged which lay further South around the Northern bank of the Solway Firth.

King Ryderrch ruled at Dumbarton and Urien or Urbgen ruled Rheged. There were various minor Kings and Chiefs, and it is as well to remember that a Prince or King may lay claim to their title while ruling an area much smaller than a modern county.

In the East, South of the River Forth were various British regions while the Saxons or Angles had established a firm foothold in North East England around Bamburgh and would press Northward and Westward creating friction and pressure on the Britons Eastern and Southern flanks. This region would eventually come under the complete domination of the Angles of Northumbria, but at the period with which we are concerned there were still independent British Kingdoms, and notably one tiny Kingdom ruled by the Scots although their own Kingdom of Dalriada was far away on the West coast of Scotland in Argyle.

This was, The Kingdom of Manau or Manann.

This Kingdom covered the area round modern day Falkirk, as far South as Slamannan on the River Avon, and probably as far North as the River Forth, and sometimes its borders pushed even beyond the Forth to Clackmannan. This tiny Kingdom, because of its proximity to the Picts and Angles, was the scene of many battles and skirmishes between the Scots and Britons who held it and its warlike neighbours namely the Picts and Angles. This was the Kingdom of Manau or Manann and its name is retained in the present day areas of Slammanan and Clackmannan.

It was held in the second half of the 6th Century by the Scots, perhaps first by Aidan MacGabran and it was still in the hands of the Scots when one of their Kings, Donald Brecc, Grandson of Aidan, was defeated there, in Strathcarron, in the year 642 AD, nearly 70 years later.

It seems that it was ruled by King Aidan in the years before he became King of Dalriada, possibly inheriting this Kingdom through a Britonnic mother, so while Manann may have had a mixed British and Scots population, the ruler at this time was undoubtedly a Scot. However, there is no doubt that in the year 574 AD Aidan was chosen by St Columba, who chose him in preference to his brother Iogenan, to become King of the Scots of Dalriada, possibly because he was already an experienced ruler, and he was duly crowned King of Dalriada in Iona in the year 574 AD.

It must be remembered that Dalriada was on the remote West Coast of Scotland and if you glance at a map you will appreciate how remote Argyle would be from the Kingdom of Manann on the East Coast of Scotland.

In between the two Kingdoms in the 6th Century AD would undoubtedly be the dense Caledonian Forests, and innumerable swamps and mountains. If the two had been in close proximity there would have been less difficulty in integrating one with the other.

However, given their geographical locations, it would have been almost impossible for King Aidan in those days to maintain control over both Kingdoms without the aid of an able general and commander who would have to battle continually to maintain the borders of the Kingdom of Manann.

Also it seems highly likely that Aidan of Dalriada, after 574 AD, would undoubtedly have to devote his energy to the running of his Scottic Kingdom of Dalriada and also deal with the problems connected with his other lands in Northern Ireland, where the Scots had originated. From this time, that is 574 AD, when he succeeded to the throne of the Scots of Dalriada, he would be occupied fully with the problems connected with these two regions. If this was indeed the case, and I believe it would have to be, then he would need an able general to fight for him in Manann, far away on the East Coast.

On top of this there is also strong evidence that King Aidan retired to monastic life, effectively giving up the throne, although he would still be credited with any victory in

battle because, until his death he would still be technically the King, whether living out his life in a monastery or not. The evidence for this is contained in The Prophecy of Berchan.

This was history written in the form of prophecy, which was supposed to have been uttered by someone living a long time before the actual writer, in this case the prophecy was attributed to St Berchan, it states regarding King Aidan:

> *" Thirteen years altogether*
> *Against the hosts of the Cruithnigh (Picts) mild the illustrious*
> *When he died he was not King*
> *On Thursday in Kintyre "*

It clearly gives the impression that Aidan was no longer effectively King at the time of his death.

Whether Aidan retired to monastic life soon after he became King and whether it was due to an injury in battle, we will never know. What is certain is that in an age when Kings led their armies into battle it says much that most of Aidan's sons were killed in battle while he died of old age.

It does seem to suggest that he had in fact retired to a monastery at an early stage, and although this may have been the case, he would nevertheless still be described in historical annals as the King and victor of many battles, even though he would not effectively be King.

Whoever was responsible for leading the Scots at this time it is certain that they carried out a policy of aggressive expansion and in the Tripartite Life of St Patrick, Patrick speaking to Fergus says "From thee the Kings of this territory shall forever descend and in Fortrenn. And this was fulfilled in Aidan, son of Gabran who took Alban (Scotland) by force". 'Alban' being Gaelic for Scotland.

The most important event in this period of the second half of the 6th Century as far as the North and Aidan was concerned, was the arrival on these shores from Ireland of the Saint called Columba in the year 563 AD.

It was he who chose Aidan as the King to succeed to the throne of Dalriada, proclaiming that he preferred another claimant but was persuaded to choose Aidan by an angel who had struck him (Columba) three times, presumably to make him change his mind.

It was Columba who went with Aidan the year after his Coronation to Ireland, where he advised and fought Aidan's case, at the Council of Druimm-Cete.

It was Columba who negotiated with Brude the King of the Picts, on Aidan's behalf.

If Aidan was King, it seems safe to say the influence of Columba was evident in his policies.

If Aidan fought the Pagan Picts and Saxons, and championed the Christian Britons, then he would have been influenced by the advice and counselling of Columba.

When Aidan fought vigorously and determinedly against his Pagan neighbours the forceful personality of Columba is evident and would be a major factor in all his decisions.

There was no force to match Aidan's Scots in the North amongst the Britons at this period of time. As well as his troops from Argyle, he could always send for reinforcements from Ireland, which he did. There is no doubt he was a champion and ally of the Britons in their struggle with the Saxons.

It could be that Aidan, on the advice of Columba, set himself up to be a successor of the Dux Brittanorum, masterminding the alliance of the Scots and Britons in their wars with the Pagan Picts and Saxons, while his sons did the actual fighting in the battles. On the other hand he may have left the campaigning entirely in the hands of his sons and in particular his eldest son.

If Aidan was at this period the successor of the Dux Brittanorum, and it seems possible, then I believe one of his sons filled the role of 'Dux Bellorum' or leader in battle. This son was called Arturius.

As we have stated, the Scots controlled the Kingdom of Manau/Manann, within this Kingdom lay the imposing Roman fortress called Camelon/Camelot, which Arturius would use in the campaigns against the Picts.


Picts
OCHILL
HILLS
Antonine
Wall
MANANN
Scots
(DALRIADA)
'Y GOGLED'
or
THE NORTH
Britons
Angles/Saxons
(BERNICIA)
Hadrians
Wall
Britons
Angles
Britons
Angles

CAMELOT

This word more than any other in the English language conjures up immediately pictures in the mind of a castle of the Norman period. A many turreted, beflagged fortress, complete with drawbridge and portcullis.

The reality must of course be somewhat different, because the Norman type castle did not come into existence until many centuries after the time of Arthur.
Nevertheless we hope to prove that Camelot did exist, that it was used by Arthur and that it certainly was a well fortified stronghold.

The word Camelot used to describe Arthur's fortress was introduced into the Arthurian legends by a French writer of the twelfth century called Chretien de Troyes.

Most observers believe that Camelot was a name invented by Chretien, and that it was based on the Roman name, Camelodunum.

At first sight this seems a reasonable assumption, but if the word Camelot was invented by Chretien to describe the fortress of Arthur, then it must be one of the most remarkable coincidences that he chose exactly the same name as a real fortress used by a real Arthur of the sixth century AD.

The odds against this happening must be almost unable to calculate.

It seems therefore reasonable to assume that Chretien was aware of an historical Arthur and Camelot.

Although there is no doubt that he introduced the name Camelot to Arthurian legend there can be equally no doubt that it was based on the real Camelot.

It is worth pointing out that there has always existed between Scotland and France strong bonds both political and economic, and trade between both are recorded as early as the sixth century AD.

In Adomnans "Life of Columba" he describes a visit of a trading ship from Gaul (France) in the sixth century which was precisely the time of Arthur.

We can safely assume that the French were well aware of the political situation in Scotland from an early period. The point being that tales of Arthur and his deeds, in what was later to be called Scotland, would easily be spread to France direct and not as previously supposed from Wales to Brittany and then to France proper.

However, to return to the fortress Camelot. This fortress had been built by the Romans during their partial occupation of Scotland. After the Romans left Britain the country

divided and subdivided into numerous tiny Kingdoms. Camelot stood in the tiny Kingdom of Manann, just perhaps a half mile North of the Roman Antonine Wall, about one and a half miles West of modern day Falkirk, on the banks above the River Carron.

The borders of the Kingdom of Manann varied, at this period of time it probably consisted of the land lying between the River Forth in the North and the River Avon in the South. The modern town of Slamannan still retaining the name of the old Kingdom of Manau (Welsh) or Manann (Irish).

At some period the Northern border must have extended North as far as Clackmannan beyond the River Forth as Clackmannan also retains the old name of Manann.

The King of this tiny Kingdom of Manann was a half Scot half Briton called Aidan son of Gabran.

In the year 574 AD Aidan had also been chosen to rule the Scots Kingdom of Dalriada (modern Argyle) which lay in the remote West of the country, by St Columba.

It seems that Aidan left the defence and indeed extension of Manann in the capable hands of his eldest son, Arthur or Arturius.

However, to return to Camelot.

Through the Kingdom of Manann ran the Roman Antonine Wall. Just North of this on the banks of the River Carron was situated the Roman fortress to which the name Camelot became attached.

The Roman name for the fortress was Ad Vallum, but the Britons had their own name which was Camelon or Camelot.

We know it was an ancient name because of its very composition, ‘Cam’ being ancient British and Gaelic for crooked. This indicates that the name was used before English became the language of the region.

Remember the name would only have to be in use by the twelfth century at the time of Chretien using it, and the evidence indicates it was in use long before Chretien’s time.

To the ancient Britons the name for the area may have been Camelon or Camelot and as the fortress was situated there, the name would become attached to it. I am not suggesting that over the fortress gate there was a sign saying “Welcome to Camelot”, but I am saying that eventually over time the name for the area and the fortress became synonymous, one and the same, this being Camelon or Camelot.

The fortress Camelot must have been impressive in its prime, the ramparts being made of

earth but the internal buildings made of stone, ensuring its durability.

It guarded the strategic ford on the River Carron and could be supplied by sea going galleys, of which King Aidan had many at his disposal, via the River Carron.

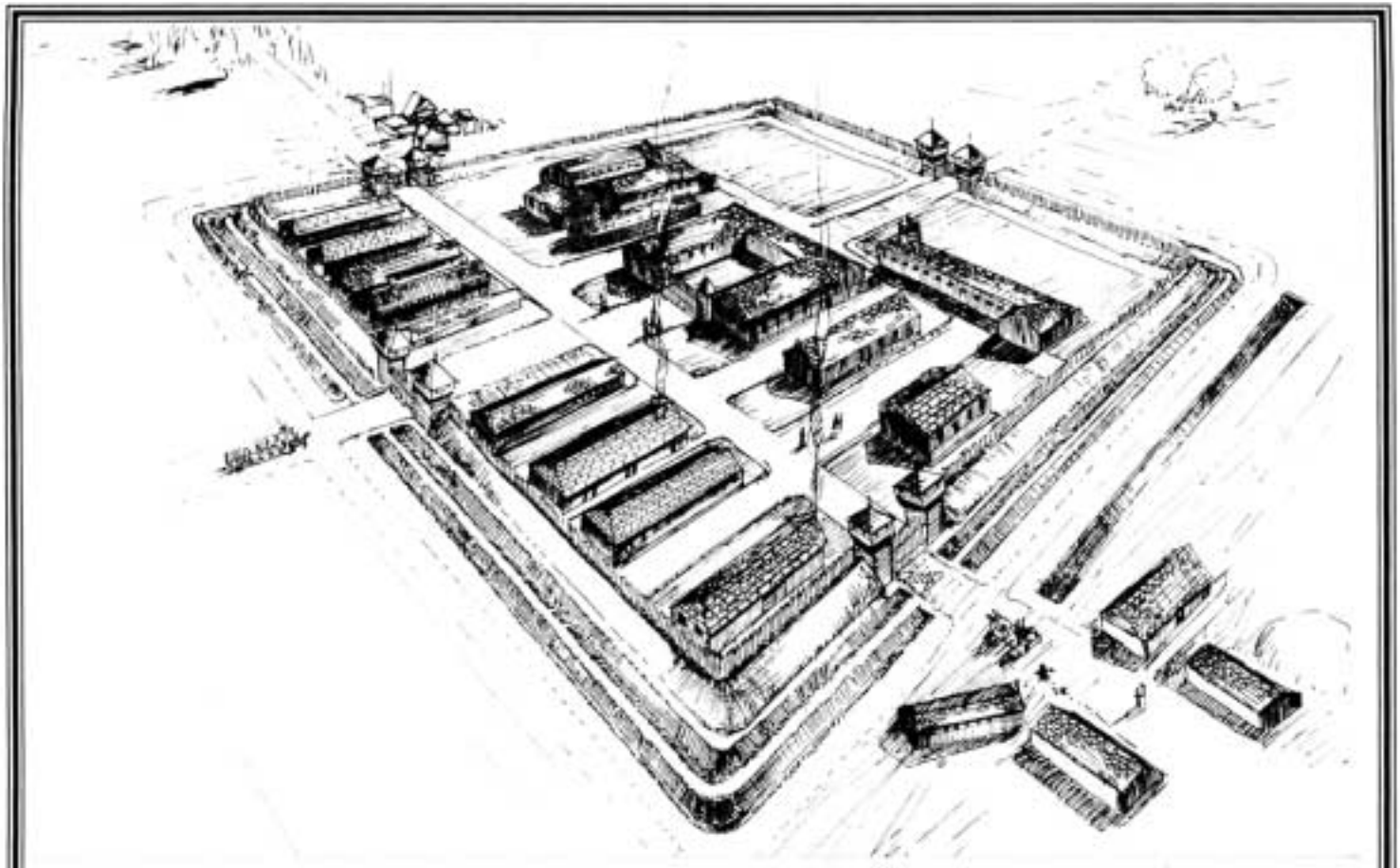
This impressive fortress was the most strategic in the Kingdom of Manann. If Arthur was here in Manann, then he must of necessity have used and occupied this position as a base and a springboard when he conducted his campaigns against his neighbouring foes.

There is no possible way he could have left it in the hands of his enemies, he must have used it.

If Arthur was here then we have a definite link between him and Camelot, to control Manann effectively he must occupy or control Camelot.

In legend Arthur died fighting Modred the son of the King of the Picts.

As we shall see the real Arthur (Arturius) died fighting in the Kingdom adjacent to Manann, its inhabitants were the Picts.



ARTIST IMPRESSION OF ROMAN FORT
CAMELOT / CAMELON NEAR FALKIRK

CAMELOT II

The first mention of Camelon/Camelot is the account by Hector Boece, whose Latin history of Scotland was published in 1522. A translation by John Bellenden appeared around 1536.

It stated “In this time (ie. of Fergus King of Scots) rang Esdaill, King of Brittonis, and Cruthneus Cameloun, King of Pichtis, quhilk biggit efter, apone the Water of Carron, the cicte of Camelon. This cicte of Camelon resistit, mony yeris efter, to the Britonis and Romanis, quhill at last, Kinneth, King of Scottis, quilk put the Pichtis out of Albion, brocht it to uter subversioun”.

About fifty years later a George Buchanan wrote this description, “This rampart (the Antonine Vallum) where it touched the River Carron, had a garrison or fortress which, by its situation and the termination of a number of roads there, had the appearance of a small city, which some of our writers falsely imagine to have been Camelodunum, but it more probably was the city Bede called Guidi. Only a few years before this was written remains of the ditches and walls, and likewise of the streets, were visible, nor even yet are the walls so completely destroyed, or the vestiges so indistinct, as not to be traced in many places, and in the earth, on being but slightly dug, square stones are discovered”.

Buchanan goes on to point out that Camelon could not be Camelodunum, which was 300 miles distant from it.

In 1695 Gibson writes of Camelon/Camelot and states “There is yet a confused appearance of a little ancient city, where the common people believe there was formerly a road for ships. They call it Camelot. It may be gathered from history that this was the palace of the Picts”. He goes on to mentioned the finding of an anchor within the last hundred years.

Wm Stukely in “An Account of a Roman Temple and other Antiquities near Graham’s Dike in Scotland” states, “We may discern the track of the streets, foundations of buildings and subterranean vaults. The country people call it Camelon or Camelot”.

Subsequent writers were at pains to point out that Boece was wrong to say the Picts occupied Camelon/Camelot, and that it was a Roman fort. However, there is nothing wrong in the assumption that this strategic area was occupied by the Picts before the coming of the Romans and although never the main Pictish capital, it could quite easily have been a tribal regional capital, of which there were many.

Also there is nothing wrong in the assumption that the Picts may have occupied Camelon/Camelot at various times after the Romans had left, as this part of the country was fought over by the Picts, the Britons and the Scots, and whoever was the victor at any particular time would be the occupants.

There we have the earliest accounts on record, and the evidence for Camelon/Camelot.

However, the fact that the local population called the fortress Camelon/Camelot, in itself means little because there are various locations throughout the country which have been identified by their local communities as Camelot.

The essential difference in the case of Camelon/Camelot near Falkirk, is that we have historical evidence that it was used by a 6th Century AD leader called Arthur (Arturius).

No other site claiming to be Camelot can match this, no other site not in Wales, not in Cornwall, not anywhere in the entire country can produce evidence that a 6th Century AD Arthur (Arturius) was connected with their region, only Camelon/Camelot near Falkirk can do this.

As we have previously stated, King Aidan who was ruler of Manann the tiny Kingdom in which Camelon/Camelot was situated, was crowned in 574 AD King of the distant Scots Kingdom of Dalriada on the remote West Coast of Scotland.

It was then that I believe he left Manann in the capable hands of his eldest son who would eventually die in battle at the head of his army in a conflict with the neighbouring Picts, his name as we have said was Arturius.

THE BATTLE OF CAMALLAN

The Annals of Wales give the date 539 AD for the Battle of Camallan. Geoffrey of Monmouth gives 542 AD.

The reasons for the dates we have already explained. More important at this point is the question —— did this battle really take place? The answer I believe is yes.

For centuries men have sought to find the location and have come up with some surprising theories.

It is generally agreed that the battle was fought on or near a river. As 'Cam' is recognised as a Welsh or Gaelic prefix signifying 'crooked', this would leave us with a river called Allan.

Numerous rivers have been forwarded as the scene of the last fatal battle of Arthur and Medraut (Modred), none to my knowledge has had the name Allan. The River Irthing seems to be a particular favourite of many.

However, I believe the location of the battle was on or near a River Allan for logical reasons which I shall explain later.

In the year 580 AD according to the Annals of Ulster, the Scots attacked the Picts of the Orkney Islands. The same Annals give for the same year the death of Cennalat, the King of the Picts, and it is entirely possible that the two events were connected, and his death a direct result of the Scottish attack on the Orkneys.

Lot the King of the Picts is stated in the Arthurian legends to be the King of the Orkneys and Lothian. As I have stated in a previous chapter, I believe Cennalat and Lot to be one and the same person.

The Scots and Britons in the early 580's AD were fighting the Picts of Orkney and East Central Scotland in the land just North of the River Forth. The Picts of this region just North of the Forth were called the 'Miathi' and Adomnan the 7th Century AD monk tells us in his 'Life of St Columba' that the Scots defeated the Miathi. The Annals of Ulster give the date for this battle as 582 AD (although it may really be 583 AD).

The Miathi as I have explained lived just North of the River Forth. Their main hill fortress and the one which still retains their name was Dumyat, 'The Fort of the Miathi'. The hill 'Dumyat' lies just North of the River Forth.

The Scots and Britons as we have said advanced from Manann in the year 582 AD to engage in and battle with the Miathi. It seems certain that Dumyat would be their objective.

From their vantage point on Dumyat the Miathi could watch the Scots as they advanced from Camelon/Camelot on the River Carron, (which would seem the ideal base to use in this campaign), past Stirling Rock as they moved along the road built by the Romans, towards the River Forth.

It seems certain the Scots would have used the Roman road to advance, as it would be the quickest route, rather than advance through forest, over hills, and across swamps.

At some point after crossing the Forth the Scots would then have to turn East and cross the river on their right, which separated them from Miathi territory. As they crossed this river they would be at their most vulnerable, and it seems the best point at which the Miathi could make a surprise attack on the Scots.

This crooked river was, and still is, known as the Allan, the crooked Allan or Camallan as it is remembered in ancient Welsh folklore. For this is I believe the scene of the legendary last fatal Battle of Camallan, the battle mentioned in the Annals of Wales and Geoffrey of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain. The battle remembered as the last fatal battle between Arthur and Medraut (Modred) the son of the King of the Picts, of Orkney and Lothian.

As we have seen the Scots were most likely responsible for King Lot's demise in 580 AD so it makes complete sense if Arthur's opponent in this battle should be King Lot's son or sons.

The Annals of Ulster record this battle as The Battle of Manau/Manann and give the date 582 AD.

The evidence is overwhelming.

In the Arthurian legends Camallan or the crooked Allan is the scene of the last fatal battle. On one side is Arthur on the other Modred the son of the King of the Picts.

In reality this battle was fought on or in the vicinity of the river Allan.

On one side was Arturius and on the other the Picts, and it resulted in the death of Arturius.

This was no hypothetical conflict, this battle is recorded in the Annals of Ulster for the year 582 AD where it is called the Battle of Manau (or Manann). Adomnan states the death of Arthur and his brother Echoid Find at this same battle.

Further evidence is given by Adomnan in his "Life of St Columba" where he states Arturius and his brother were slain in the Battle of the Miathi". The Miathi as we have said, inhabited the land adjacent to Manau/Mannan.

If by some chance the Miathi had not attacked actually at the River Allan, and the Scots had been allowed to cross and advance towards Dumyat hill (the Miathi stronghold) before the battle commenced, the battle would still have been fought in the vicinity of the River Allan, because Dumyat is only four miles from the river.

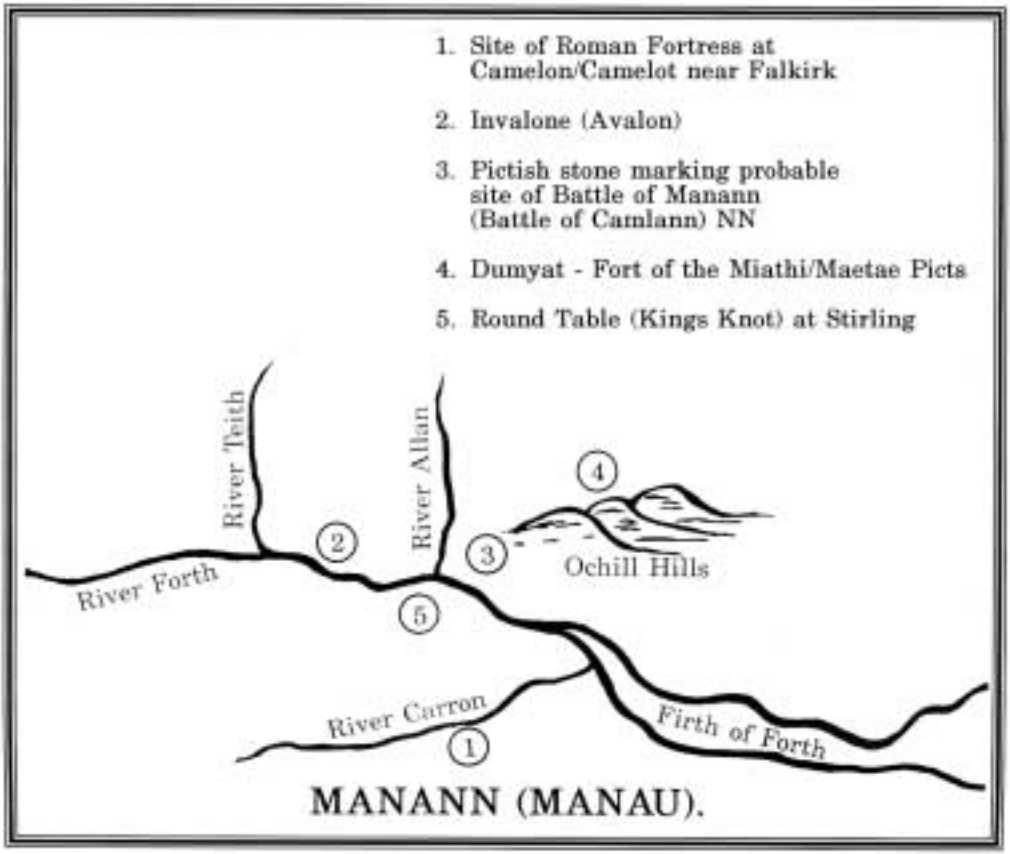
So if there was really a Battle of Camallan as described in the Welsh Annals, then it surely must have been here, the Battle of

Camallan, the Battle of Manann, and the Battle of the Miathi, must be one and the same. Remember, the Irish/Scots would have had a different name from the Welsh for the same battle.

The battle was fought on or in the vicinity of the River Allan, which would account for the name Camallan or Crooked Allan. In reality and in legend the protagonists were Arturius on one side and the Picts (and presumably the sons of the King of the Picts) on the other. In reality and in legend the battle resulted in the fatal wounding of Arturius.

Here is the only 6th Century Arturius killed in battle against the Picts. In fact here is the only 6th Century Arturius. Can there be any remaining doubts?

The River Allan despite its English sounding name is in fact a very ancient name and it is definitely pre Roman, the name derived from the word Alauna, so it is safe to say it had the same name in the days of Arthur.


1. Site of Roman Fortress at Camelon/Camelot near Falkirk
2. Invalone (Avalon)
3. Pictish stone marking probable site of Battle of Manann (Battle of Camlann) NN
4. Dumyat - Fort of the Miathi/Maetae Picts
5. Round Table (Kings Knot) at Stirling
River Teith
River Allan
River Forth
Ochill Hills
River Carron
Firth of Forth
MANANN (MANAU).

THE BATTLE OF CAMLANN - II

If you travel to Stirling and then go to the Wallace Monument on Abbey Craig, from the top of this monument looking North you have a fine view of the Ochill Hills. These hills were in the territory of the Pictish tribe known as the Maithi or Maetae. The hills include one known as Dumyat, or the fort of the Maithi.

The Miathi were the Pictish opponents of Arthur (Arturius) in his last battle, the battle known in Welsh tradition as the Battle of Camlann.

As we have previously stated, Arthur (Arturius) and his forces may have been attacked by the Picts on or near the River Allan which flows close to Dumyat, and this would explain the Welsh name for the battle, Camlann meaning the crooked Allan.

The battle on the other hand may have taken place on the hill of Dumyat itself, which is still close enough to the River Allan to justify the name, Battle of Camlann.

However, if you look North from the top of the Wallace Monument towards the Ochill Hills, you will see in a field which lies between the River Forth and the Ochill Hills, a large Pictish stone, which has been placed there to commemorate a great battle.

Tradition has it that this was the scene of a battle between Kenneth McAlpine and the Picts in the 9th Century AD. However, there is no evidence to support this claim, it is however definitely in the location you would expect to find the possible site of the battle of Arthur and the Maithi Picts.

It is just across the River Forth in Maithi territory, and Arthur and his forces may have used this route as they advanced towards Dumyat.

As there is no historical evidence to support the belief that this was the scene of a battle between Kenneth McAlpine and the Picts, I suggest that the Pictish stone on this battlefield may mark the site of the earlier historic battle between Arthur and the Picts, that being the last fatal “Battle of Camlann”, which in legend is remembered as the battle where Arthur died, and the fellowship of the Round Table was broken forever.

Remember this earlier battle between Arthur and the Picts is supported by historical evidence, while there is no evidence to support the belief that this was the scene of a battle between Kenneth McAlpine and the Picts.

AVALON

Somewhere on or near the River Allan, Arthur was fatally wounded. According to legend he was taken by his sister Morgan across by boat to be healed on the island of Avalon.

Researchers have concluded that Avalon was a figment of Geoffrey of Monmouth's imagination, and that Avalon is simply a word based on the Welsh words meaning Apple Island (Yyns Affalon).

However, on the other hand it may be one of those dimly remembered facts that have become folklore, and which although not strictly true, are nevertheless based on real events. Because across the River Allan the land was an island, the island formed by the River Allan on its East side, the River Forth on its South side, the River Teith on its West side, and by water filled swamps elsewhere, which would make this area of land a complete island.

The swamps were not drained until the 18th Century AD and although the land is now dry and fertile, the picture in the 6th Century would have been very different.

Could it therefore have been this island that Morgan transported Arthur to? The name Avalon being taken from the River Allan (Av alon).

It is interesting to note that in the 14th Century there was a record of a settlement on this island called Invalone. The names Avalon and Invalone sounding remarkably similar. So we may ask ourselves, which island is the most likely to be Avalon. Some fantasy apple island or a real island lying across the Camallan with a settlement known as Invalone. So here we have what seems a logical contender for the island of Avalon, immediately in the vicinity of the battle, across the River (Cam) Allan. An island not a hundred miles distant but situated within the locality of the battle, with the name Invalone.

Leaving aside the question of Avalon and returning once again to the Battle of Camallan, it seems the similarity between the legend and the reality are beyond dispute.

The only portion of the story open to dispute, the only difference between legend and reality is the date of the battle. Geoffrey of Monmouth gives 542 AD, The Annals of Wales gives 539 AD, while the infinitely more reliable Annals of Ulster gives 582 AD. (This is backed also by the Annals of Tigernach).

As I have stated the reason for the variation in the dates is simply that Geoffrey having placed Arthur in the first half of the 6th Century had to make his demise 542 AD to fit with the rest of his 'history'. The Annals of Wales I believe used Geoffrey as their guide for the date.

There can be no doubt in my opinion that the legendary Battle of Camallan and the historical Battle of Arturius and the Picts are one and the same, despite the difference in the dates.

MORGAN

Whether Arthur's sister took him to Avalon is a separate question. Indeed was there a Morgan, or was she a figment of a medieval writer's imagination, after all her character is said to be based on the Irish Goddess, Morrigen.

If I could find evidence of her existence it would complete the jigsaw. If she had existed and was Arturius' sister it would surely prove beyond reasonable doubt that this was indeed the real Arthur, the Arthur of legend and history.

There is no other recorded Arturius of the 6th Century let alone one with a sister called Morgan.

This would be the final piece of the puzzle, it would make sense of the legend which stated Arthur's sister Morgan was married to Urien of Gore and Gore being described in Adomnan's Life of St Columba as King Aidan's son-in-law, and therefore Arturius' brother-in-law.

It was therefore with this objective in mind that I began to search for evidence of Morgan, known to legend as Morgan Le Fey.

After many false leads I remembered that Arturius' brother, Echoid Buide, was said to have a sister called Maithgen. After finding the title of the book which was the source of this information, I decided to follow this lead.

It took me to the library in the British Museum in London where I searched a book called Oengus the Culdee or rather a translation of the same by Whitley Stokes and there to my surprise and relief, I found that King Aidan MacGabran had a daughter called Morgein, Morgein meaning sea birth.

It followed therefore, if Aidan had a daughter called Morgan then Arturius, his son, had a sister (or half sister) called Morgein. The spelling of course does not matter, this was Morgan. As far as I was concerned there could now be no doubt whatsoever that Arthur of legend and Arturius of history were one and the same.

The search was over, the final proof, if indeed more proof were needed.

Arthur indeed had a real sister called Morgan, no fantasy figure based on an Irish war goddess called Morrigen, but a real flesh and blood sister called Morgan.

With the death of Arturius it seems an appropriate time to return to the story of Constantine. In a previous chapter I told how he gave up his Kingdom and turned to religion, becoming a monk.

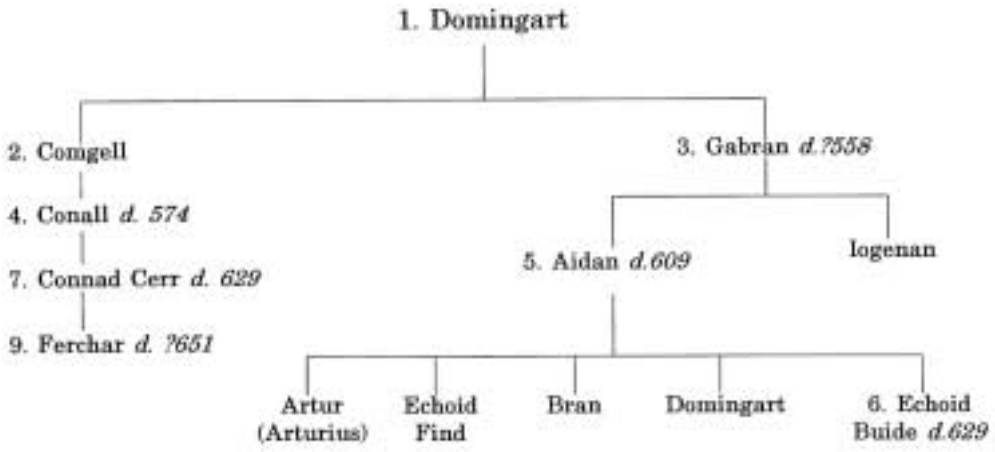
He travelled from his Kingdom in Cornwall to Ireland, and from there to the North of Britain to what we now call Scotland, dwelling amongst the Scots. He is in fact remembered as the first martyr of the Scots, and according to tradition was martyred by pirates in Kintyre which was in the Kingdom of Dalriada, the Kingdom of the Scots.

He ministered to the Scots around the time of Arturius and this being the case it may have been thought a possibility that he was present at the death of Arturius after the fatal Battle of Camallan.

Whether or not he was present at Arturius' passing, we cannot prove, but we can say with confidence that the two in reality as in legend, may have met during the time that Constantine spent amongst the Scots, and as I have said previously, this fact could possibly have led Geoffrey of Monmouth to claim that Arthur had passed his Kingdom into the safe keeping of Constantine, once King of Dumnonia.

Genealogical Tables

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF THE SCOTS OF DALRIADA
(The Kings are numbered.)



ARTHUR - ARTURIUS

Although there has always been doubt regarding the reality of a Welsh or Cornish Arthur, there can be no doubt whatsoever about the Northern one. No ifs, buts, maybes, or perhaps', this Arthur was a reality. We have him recorded in a reliable document, which is Adomnan's Life of St Columba. Just a brief mention of Arturius, but that is all we need. The rest of the picture can be filled in with what we know regarding his father, and with what we know about the political situation of the country at this period in time.

What is more we have the Irish Annals to corroborate Adomnan's statements.

What a refreshing change, to have Arturius mentioned as a historical figure in a reliable historical document as opposed to some shadowy half real figure in a Welsh legend.

The only question can be, is the Arturius of Adomnan one and the same as the Arthur of legend. If he belonged to the second half of the 6th Century AD can he be the same one whom Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed, lived and died in the first half of the 6th Century AD. Since we know that Geoffrey simply filled the gap in known history with the story of Arthur, then the answer must be a resounding yes. Also since we know that the earliest references to Arthur never describe him as a King, but rather as a warrior and leader in battle, and that Geoffrey simply used the story of Arthur promoting him to King, to suit his own purposes. We can safely say that our Northern Arturius fits the description of warrior and battle leader perfectly.

How then do the two Arthurs compare.

Firstly, we have the Arthur of legend who according to Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Annals of Wales, lived in the first half of the 6th Century AD and died in 542 AD or 539 AD, depending on which account you choose to believe.

Secondly, the Artur or Arturius of history who lived in the second half of the 6th Century AD and died in battle in 582 AD.

As we have said, the question is are these two Arthurs of history and legend one and the same? Despite the difference in the date of their demise, I believe they are.

Consider these points:

The Arthur of legend was a contemporary of King Urien.

The Arthur of legend was a contemporary also of Myrddin (Merlin).

The Arthur of legend had a fortress called Camelot.

The Arthur of legend died fighting the Picts.

The Arthur of legend had a sister called Morgan.

The Arthur of legend was an ally of the British Kings.

The Arturius of history was identical to the Arthur of legend in all these respects. While we also know that Artur or Arturius is the original 6th Century AD version of the name Arthur.

Why then the difference in the date of his demise?

The answer as we have already stated several times is simple, Geoffrey of Monmouth, when writing his fanciful History of the Kings of Britain, had used the story of Arthur to fill the gap in known history between 500 AD and 550 AD approximately, and having done this had no alternative but to make Arthur's demise before 550 AD, choosing the date 542 AD.

There is only one Arthur of the 6th Century on record, who was a contemporary of Urien (and indeed an ally of Urien) and Merlin, who had a sister or half sister called Morgan and who died in battle against the Picts.

I defy anyone to show me another 6th Century Arthur in any reliable historical records, let alone one who fits the description above.

No doubt there will still be some who require more proof, but short of producing an eye witness from the 6th Century AD, which is unlikely, I do not really know what else we could provide.

As far as I am concerned we have proved what we set out to prove at the beginning, that beyond all reasonable doubt the Arturius of history and the Arthur of legend are one and the same.

ARTHURIAN CONNECTIONS IN SCOTLAND

PARTICULARLY IN MANANN

There are many places in Scotland connected with Arthur.

There is Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, there is Ben Arthur the Mountain situated near the Cobbler near Loch Lomond.

Some might say they have been so called only since Geoffrey of Monmouth published the stories of Arthur in his history of the Kings of Britain, making Arthur known throughout much of Europe. Since Geoffrey had stated that his Arthur had in fact almost annihilated the Scots in battle, why then would they have adopted this Arthur as a hero, to name places after.

It seems unlikely that a nation would adopt as a hero someone who was said to have almost annihilated them. After all, you would not expect the English nation to name places after say Napoleon Bonaparte or any other military opponent.

A more reasonable explanation seems to be that stories of Arthur were around for a long time before Geoffrey's account in the 12th Century. In fact as we know Arthur was in Scotland in the 6th Century and obviously made a lasting impression.

Arthur's O'on

Arthur's base was as we know, Manann, the Kingdom lying between the Forth on its Northern border and the River Avon on its Southern border.

Situated on the River Carron which ran through Manau was the magnificent Camelot/Camelon, the Roman built fortress. On the opposite bank of the River Carron that is, on the North bank, was a Roman temple. This was known as early as the year 1293 AD as the "Furnus Arthuri" and subsequently known as Arthur's O'on.

As we can see the name Arturius now had an 'h' and the 'us' had been dropped. Medieval writers often added an 'h' to a name
between a vowel and a consonant, hence Artur would become Arthur.

However, to return to the Roman temple, the name for it developed into Arthur's O'on which was supposedly the local version of Arthur's Oven. This in turn had presumably developed from the mistaken belief that the 'Furnus' of the 'Furnus Arthuri' was the English word furnace.

The words ‘Furnus Arthuri’ are presumably Latin, there is no such word as Furnus in Latin, but it could possibly be a corruption of the Latin, Feramus, meaning (we) I carry or I bear. Monks often made mistakes when copying manuscripts, and that would seem to have been the case here, remember that the island of Iona was originally Io, and was latinised to Iova, then somewhere in the course of time a monk mistakenly copied it as Iona, and Iona it has stayed ever since. So nothing is impossible and this indicates how easily words can change. So Furnus may originally have been Feramus. If this was the case the description on or attached to the temple may have originally read (We) I carry or I bear Arthur.

I hasten to add that this, other than the fact that the temple was known as ‘Furnus Arthuri’ and Arthur’s O’on, is supposition.

The temple was dismantled around the year 1743 AD, and a full-scale replica of the beehive shaped building which stood over 6m high constructed as a dovecote surmounting the stable block at Penicuik House.

The Round Table

On the banks of the River Forth between it and the rock on which Stirling Castle is built, there is an earthwork, circular in form, which is known as the Kings Knot. This circular earthwork was regarded centuries ago as the origin of the Round Table of Arthur.

The idea of a Round Table had been introduced into the Arthurian legends by a Norman Poet of the 12th Century called Wace, who assumed most people were aware of it, as he refers to it as famous. The 12th Century French writer of Arthurian Romance, Chretien de Troyes also assumes this, and it seems likely they were referring to something real and tangible when they spoke of the Round Table, and as we have seen the stories and legends of Scotland would pass easily to France due to their close bonds, political and economic.

This earthwork, the Kings Knot, at the foot of Stirling Rock, would seem to have a better claim than any other, to be the original of the Round Table, especially when you consider that it was within the Kingdom of Manann and therefore connected with the 6th Century Arturius. Stirling Rock was a strategic position and we can be sure that Arturius and the Scots would definitely have had it within their control.

The Kings Knot is still clearly visible from the battlements of Stirling Castle today.

ARTHUR OF MANANN

Regarding Arthur of legend. I am not suggesting that over time the story of Arthur has not been embellished with the deeds of other kings and warriors, both real and imaginary, I am however saying that Arthur of Manann, is the original Arthur, that this Arthur is the ultimate source of the legends. This being the case then this Arthur must be regarded as the original historical figure on which all subsequent legends are based.

The Arthur of legend died fighting the Picts.

There is only one Arthur recorded in historical records who died fighting the Picts, and it is Arthur of Manann. Search as you will, you will find no other.

There is only one Arthur on record who was an ally of the British Kingdoms, and it is Arthur of Manann.

There is only one Arthur on record who was a contemporary of Merlin and the British King Urien, and it is Arthur of Manann.

There is only one Arthur who had a sister called Morgan and it is Arthur of Manann.

In fact there is only one Arthur of the 6th Century AD recorded in reliable documents, and it is Arthur of Manann.

Whether or not you agree with the suggested locations of Camelot and the Round Table is of no consequence, this does not effect the evidence of an historical Arthur.

The evidence for the Round Table and Camelot can only be traced back several centuries, this is not the case with Arthur, evidence for him is available in almost contemporary documents, dating almost from the period of time in which he existed.

Arthur or Arturius was the son of Aidan MacGabran, who was himself the great grandson of Fergus Mor. Fergus is traditionally regarded as the king responsible for establishing the first Scots colony in Argyle, bringing the Scots from their homeland in Ireland.

This is only the traditional view, and no doubt there were already Scots colonies in Scotland before Fergus came.

The Scots gradually spread their influence through various regions of central Scotland, until as we have said, by the time of Aidan, he was regarded as the king of many domains.

When he became King of the Scots of Dalriada, Aidan was no doubt orientated towards the mother country, that being Ireland.

The vacuum created by his departure from Manann in central Scotland was no doubt filled by his son Arthur. Aidan earned himself the Welsh epithet - Vradog or treacherous, and the explanation may be that when he accepted the crown of Dalriada, the Britons in the other North British Kingdoms may have felt betrayed and deserted, and perhaps this is the reason why his son Arthur was held in such high esteem by the Britons, as he assumed the role of the “Dux Bellorum” or battle leader of the Britons, in their wars with the Saxons and Picts.

As we have already stated there is no question that Arthur (Arturius), while defending the Kingdom of Manann, died in battle with the Picts.

There is no evidence anywhere of any other Arthur who was an ally of the British Kingdoms, and as the son of the most powerful King of the north, Aidan MacGabran, Arthur was no doubt held in high regard by the Britons.

On the many occasions when the Scots aided the Britons, if Aidan was not leading the army, and it seems reasonable to assume this, because while his sons died in battle he died at home in Dalriada of old age, then it must have been on these occasions that his son Arthur won his everlasting fame as the battle leader of the Britons.

GUENEVER

OR GWENEVERE OR GWENHWYFAR

After the publication of Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'history' in the 12th Century a great deal of folklore grew in Wales and elsewhere, regarding Arthur and his queen Gwenevere.

The Welsh would eventually claim that the name Gwenevere was based on an original Welsh name Gwenhwyfar.

However, I think the reverse is true, and that the Welsh Gwenhwyfar is in fact based on the name used by Geoffrey and French writers of the Arthurian legends in the 12th Century AD.

There is no evidence of a Gwenevere or Gwenhwyfar in Wales before the 12th Century

In fact most if not all Welsh legends regarding Gwenevere and Arthur were written down after Geoffrey's history had appeared, indeed it almost seems as if there was created a legend producing industry in Wales after the publication of Geoffrey's 'history' in the 12th Century. However, to return to Gwenevere.

Although the name of Arthur's queen has developed into Guenever or Gwenevere, or as the Welsh call her Gwenhwyfar, the fact is that Geoffrey of Monmouth did not call her any of these names. He in fact called her Guanhumara. It is easy to see how subsequent copiers would develop names for Arthur's queen based on the first part of the name used by Geoffrey, that being Guan. Guan would develop to Guenever or Gwenevere, or as the Welsh call her, Gwenhwyfar.

However, if we look more closely at Geoffrey's name for Arthur's queen, Guanhumara, we see that the first part of it, Guan, is the equivalent of the Celtic word meaning 'white'.

The 'h' in the middle of Guanhumara would simply be placed there between the vowel and the consonant. So if we remove the 'Guanh' we are left with 'Umara', and this may give us the clue to the real name of Arthur's queen.

Although Geoffrey had written an almost completely false 'history', he had no doubt based some of the Arthurian content on real people, and he probably was aware who the real Arthur and his wife were and their true time and location in history, and no doubt the real name of Arthur's queen. He may have simply taken the real name or something similar to it and added the prefix 'guan' meaning white.

The reason for this I will explain.

In Scotland, in the region we can now prove Arthur lived, there is a local tradition that after Arthur's last fatal battle, his queen was abducted and taken North by the Picts, who were as we know Arthur's opponents in that battle.

This tradition states that sometime after her abduction she died and was buried at a place called Meigle which was in the heart of Pictish territory.

However, the most interesting point is the name by which Arthur's queen is known here, she is called Anora and it does not take a great deal of imagination to realise how easily Anora could transfer over time to Umara.

The two names sounding remarkably similar. Also, documents containing the name could change it slightly when copied over the centuries.

We cannot prove that this is the grave of Arthur's queen, but we can say, that it is in the location you would expect, that is, the heart of Pictish territory, since we know now who the real Arthur was and who his opponents were in his last fatal battle.

Also the name 'Anora' is so similar to Umara, I would suggest that Umara may be derived from 'Anora' and that they are the name of the same person, that being Arthur's queen, known to history as Gwenevere.

The fact that Arthur's queen is known as Anora in this region of Scotland would suggest that this is the source of her name, and that this may be her real name. If the name of Arthur's queen had arrived here from any other region it would have been prefixed with the word Guan or Gwen. Because from the time that Geoffrey of Monmouth in the 12th Century took her name and prefixed it with the word Guan (meaning white), she has been known universally as Guan or Gwen something or other, the most popular development of the name being Gwenever. Geoffrey may have been aware of the other name of Arthur's queen which is Anora, he added the prefix Guan making it Guananora, and over the centuries as his original was copied this could have evolved into Guanumara. The alternative is that Geoffrey took the phonetic equivalent of the name and used that, for remember the Pictish and Scottish pronunciation of the name would undoubtedly be different from Geoffrey's Norman Welsh.

Another source of the Arthurian legends which may have been used by Geoffrey and others has not yet been mentioned. In the year 1100 AD Henry I of England took Maud the daughter of Malcolm Canmore, as his bride. She was accompanied to England by her brother David, later to become David I of Scotland.

As Stirling was a royal residence of the Scottish monarchs, and as it was connected with the real Arthur, no doubt the legends of Arthur and his queen were well known by the royal pair and their retainers, and it is entirely possible that they brought with them to the court of Henry I tales and legends of the real Arthur.

This being the case, it is no surprise that Geoffrey just 36 years after Maud and David's arrival, should produce his 'History of the Kings of Britain' with its large Arthurian content, and no doubt with the other name of Arthur's queen - Anora.

However, it is only fair to mention that the source of the legend of Anora in Scotland can only be traced back as far as Hector Boece who wrote of it only in the 16th Century. So it can hardly be regarded as historically reliable evidence, although Boece may have based his writing on already existing legends there is no way we can prove that this is the case.

CAMELOT

AND THE ROUND TABLE

To establish whether the Round Table and Camelot were real and their possible locations, I took this approach.

Most researchers look for the Round Table and Camelot, hoping to find these and then prove Arthur's existence.

I took the opposite approach and decided to establish the true identity of the historical Arthur, knowing that once established, Camelot and the Round Table, if real, would be situated in the kingdom in which Arthur lived.

By doing this we can with reason assume that Camelot and the Round Table are situated within the kingdom associated with Arthur, this being the kingdom of Manann, which lay as we have said between the River Forth and the River Avon, covering an area of perhaps one hundred square miles.

So we have narrowed it down to the tiny kingdom of Manann, and the two sites within this kingdom which can claim with justification to be Camelot and the Round Table are Camelon on the Carron and the Round Table or Kings Knot at Stirling. One guarding the ford across the River Carron, the other the final gathering point before advancing across the River Forth.

Both served a useful purpose, they were not simply landmarks.

THE ROUND TABLE

The first notice we have of the Round Table at Stirling in extant literature is in the poem 'The Bruce', in which there is a description of the flight of the English King Edward II, after the Battle of Bannockburn.

The words of the poet Barbour are as follows:

> *"An besouth the Castill went they thone,*
> *Rychte by the Round Tabill away,*
> *And syne the park enwioround thai,*
> *And towart Lythkow held in bye"*

This poem was written around the year 1370, so here we have the first proof of the existence of something known as the Round Tabill at Stirling.

This Round Tabill can still be seen today at the foot of the rock on which stands Stirling Castle. Today it is known as "The Kings Knot". The word 'Knot' may be derived from the Celtic word 'knoc', meaning low rounded hill.

The next mention we have of the Round Table at Stirling is by William of Worcester when he states; "Rex Arthurus custodiebat le round table in castro de Styrlynge aliter Snowdon - West Castell", clearly stating that the Round Table was kept at Stirling.

The idea of the Round Table was first introduced into the Arthurian legend by a Norman/French writer called Wace in the 12th Century AD, and he spoke of it as though it were already well known and famous.

There is no way we can prove it existed in its present form at the time of Wace or Arthur, it may well have been altered and added to over the centuries. We do know that gardens were created by the Stewart monarchs and it may be that they incorporated the Kings Knot into their designs.

However, that does not alter the fact that the Round Table was in existence before the Stewarts, we know this from the poem of Barbour, so even if originally simply a mound or hill around which the warriors of Arthur gathered, and the shape was altered through the centuries, the Kings Knot nevertheless may have evolved from this original, and therefore can claim with justification to be the Round Table of Arthur, first mentioned by the Norman writer, Wace.

We can now prove the area it is situated in was within the domain of Arthur, and where better to gather your warriors around for final inspiration and perhaps Christian blessing from the Celtic monks, before they advanced across the River Forth to engage the Pagan Picts in their lands immediately beyond the river.

Indeed this must have been the case, as they must surely have gathered around this Round Table on many occasions, before each expedition made across the river.

The following is a description of the Round Table in its present form:

“The main feature of the construction is an octagonal mound in the centre of a series of graduated terraced platforms, the lowest of which takes the shape of a parallelogram, measuring almost four hundred feet on each side.

The central mound or Round Table is six feet high and eighteen feet in diameter, and it is surrounded by an embankment slightly lower than it, and separated from it by an open ditch.

The diameter of the surrounding embankment is around eighty feet, and it is octagonal in shape also.

The Round Table and the outer octagonal embankment rest upon a lower and broader terrace of the same shape which itself rests upon and occupies the centre of the large parallelogram.

There are pathways leading from the outer square up to the top embankment”.

This brief description only gives some idea of the appearance of the Round Table, but to appreciate how impressive this monument to the past really is, one must go and view it.

Whether or not the round table existed in Arthur’s time we cannot prove, but it is not unreasonable to assume that it was in existence in some form at the time of its introduction by Wace into the Arthurian legends. We know it was there at the time when Barbour wrote his poem “The Bruce”, and it has been there in some form for more than six centuries since then.

What we can say with confidence is, that this particular ‘Round Table’ has a better claim than any other in the entire country to be regarded as the original of the Round Table of Arthur.

Since this is the only one which can prove a connection with a real historical Arthur, and since it is situated in the kingdom with which Arthur was connected, this being the Kingdom of Manann.

SUMMARY

THE MYSTERY OF KING ARTHUR

There are possibly five reasons why Arthur has remained a mystery until the present time.

These are, one - the name Arthur.

Historians often claim that there are no historical records of Arthur, and that nothing has been written down about him until centuries after his time.

This may be true, in the earlier historical documents no mention of Arthur is found. However, the reason for this is simple. Arthur is a later development in the name Artur or Arturius. The name Arthur you would not expect to find in the earliest records, because the name did not exist in this form when the earliest records were written.

On the other hand mentions of Artur and Arturius are found in very early records indeed. The spelling of Arthur with an h possibly did not develop before the 12th Century AD. so when searching the earliest records for Arthur, you would look for and expect to find only mentions of Artur or Arturius. Arturius is mentioned in the document of the 7th Century AD known as, Adomnans LIFE OF COLUMBA, where he states that Arturius was the son of a King called Aidan, and that he died in battle against the Picts.

A similar development can be shown for the name Anthony. The earliest form of this name is Antoninus, it then developed to Antony, and finally to Anthony when somewhere in the course of time an h was added between the t and the o.

Regarding a search for a King Arthur.

This would prove impossible, because Arthur was not a king and was only called a king from the 12th Century AD by Geoffrey of Monmouth in his false and fabled History of the Kings of Britain. Records earlier than this refer to Arthur simply by his first name.

Regarding any connection between Arthur and Wales and Cornwall.

There is no historical evidence that Arthur was connected with these regions in even the remotest way. The connection can only be traced back to the 12th Century AD, and again to the fabled “History” of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Even the earliest poems preserved in Wales, for example the “Gododdin” do not come from Wales, they in fact come from the land we now call Scotland. The “Gododdin” tells the story of an expedition by Celtic warriors from the region of Edinburgh in Scotland, Arthur is mentioned in one line. So even the earliest poems do not connect Arthur with Wales.

Regarding Arthur's time and place in history.

The fourth reason why the mystery of Arthur has persisted until the present day, is that most researchers believe he lived either in the 5th Century AD or the first half of the 6th Century AD, when in fact I believe we have sufficient evidence to prove he lived in the second half of the 6th Century AD. The only record of a British leader called Arthur dying in battle is recorded in the Annals of Ulster and the date given is 582 AD, the Battle of Manann.

Another reason which causes confusion and distorts the concept of Arthur is that since the 12th Century AD, romantic writers have dressed Arthur in the trappings of the particular time in which they were writing. Hence, Arthur would eventually become associated with knights in armour, chivalry, mounted cavalry, and Norman type castles. Simply because all these existed at the particular time in which the romantic writers were weaving their tales of Arthur. The 6th Century AD reality was somewhat more grim, but nevertheless the effect of the romanticised tales would mean that forever Arthur would be associated with knights on horseback, castles and quests for the Holy Grail. None of which was true, but all of which helped to obscure the true story of Arthur.

In the second half of the 6th Century AD, the ancient Britons inhabited the land all the way from Cornwall up the Western half of England, and into Scotland as far as the River Forth which flows past Stirling, and also up to the River Clyde on which the City of Glasgow now stands. So the Western side of England and all Southern Scotland was inhabited by the ancient Britons in the 6th Century AD. These ancient Britons shared a common language, and common background, legends and mythology, so the legends of Arthur could originate in any region where the Britons dwelt. Since we know that they lived in Southern Scotland, there is as much reason to believe that the legends of Arthur originated there as anywhere else in the British Isles. Indeed Scotland is the only area were a reliable record of any Arthur of the 6th Century AD is to be found, there are none in Wales or Cornwall.

By the time Geoffrey of Monmouth was writing Arthur into his fabled history in the 12th Century AD the political picture had changed completely. The two countries we now know as England and Scotland had come into existence. The island of Britain was by now divided into two, the ancient Britons had for the most part been dispossessed. The only areas still inhabited by the descendants of the ancient Britons in England by the time of Geoffrey, were Wales and Cornwall. So naturally Geoffrey connected Arthur with these two regions, and with these two regions he has mistakenly been connected with ever since.

CONCLUSION

The stark simplicity of the words of Adomnan in his Life of St Columba when he states “For Arthur and Echoid Find were slain a little while later, in the Battle of the Miathi”, strike home like a hammer blow.

The death of a legend composed of two lines, how this contrasts with the descriptions of Arthur in the Welsh legends.

No contests here with giants, no slaying of 900 of the enemy single handed, no exaggeration of the abilities of the man, no fanciful stories, just a slaying on the battle field.

Perhaps Arthur and his brother Echoid Find died on a muddy rain swept hillside, like thousands of warriors before them. Perhaps he died with a Pictish battle axe embedded in him, his life blood ebbing slowly away, who knows?.

However, the very thought of the reality makes you want to ask the Welsh chroniclers, why did you do to the man the injustice of making him almost god like and super human? Yet without their tales of his super human prowess and without Geoffrey’s exaggeration of his deeds, there would be no legend, for they more than anyone made the spark a flame, and the flame a fire, that spread through the Western World, where the deeds of Arthur are known, real and unreal till the present day, for this they must take most of the credit.

For centuries the Britons waited for his return, they said he had not died but was only asleep. The body certainly died, but the spirit of the man perhaps lived on, and in this sense this part of the legend may be said to be true.

Indeed it may well have been this same spirit which inspired the legendary William Wallace, who fought in the same land, against the same enemy and for the same people, so who knows, in his country’s need, perhaps just perhaps, Arturius will wake from his slumber and come again.

THE END

D F CARROLL

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INDEX

A Quest
For Camelot

This book is based not on legends, but rather the best available historical evidence. Therefore, at the end of this book, you will not be left to wonder “who really was Arthur?”, because this book will provide a clear and unequivocal answer to that question. Most importantly, it will be based on historical evidence.

The name Arthur in it’s 6th Century AD form is Artur and as the monks who recorded the earliest history wrote in Latin, they recorded the name as Arturius.

David F. Carroll