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The development of the saints' cults and the ecclesiastical landscape of early medieval south Wales, c. 600-1200

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Award date:
2022

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**The development of the saints' cults and
the ecclesiastical landscape of early
medieval south Wales, c. 600-1200**

PhD Thesis

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February 2022

Summary

This thesis examines the saints cults and ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales in the early medieval period, from 600 to 1200, the period following the 'Age of the Saints' when the early saints were thought to be active, up to the period when much of the hagiographical material was produced. The first four chapters address the cults of St Cadog, St Illtud, St Teilo and St Dyfrig. Several aspects of the cults are addressed in each chapter. The relationships that the saints and their foundations had with secular rulers and other saints and their cults are examined first. The presence of the cult in the medieval landscape is addressed next, looking at the principal foundations of the saints, the distribution of the dedications to the saints in south Wales and the presence of inscribed stones at these dedications. The relics of the saints are also examined, looking at the main types of relics that were associated with the early medieval saints cults. The cults of St Cadog, St Teilo and St Dyfrig each had a period of promotion in the twelfth century that is also discussed in the respective chapters. The thesis concludes by comparing each of the cults to create an overarching view of how saint's cults in south Wales developed in this period, and then compares this with the development of the saint's cults of Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and England, the Insular neighbours of Wales.

Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

Acknowledgements

I would firstly like to thank Huw Pryce, my supervisor, without whom this thesis would not have been produced. His advice, knowledge of the subject and continuous guidance have been invaluable. I would also like to thank the department and the library staff who have supported me over the course of my studies. I would also like to thank the *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* for publishing some of my research on the cult of St Cadog in the twelfth century.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my parents and partner, Llŷr Hughes, who have always supported my studies. I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandpa, grandma and grandad, three great supporters of the quest for knowledge who always encouraged my hopes of completing a PhD.

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Introduction

This study is concerned with the development of saints' cults in early medieval Wales, concentrating on the period from the seventh century to the end of the twelfth century. The scholarship of the last two centuries has provided a varied view of the subject, showing not only changing opinions but also differing topics of focus. The following review will show how scholarship has developed since the nineteenth century and how modern scholarship has addressed the subject of Welsh saints' cults.

Rice Rees is the most notable scholar of the nineteenth century who studied early Christianity and saints in early medieval Wales. Rice Rees is one of the few from the period to have considered the topic of how saints' cults developed. He argued that cults would have spread in a number of ways. Often the cult of a saint had its origins at the site where the saint was buried: a church would be built on the site and then in the local area further churches would be dedicated to that saint's memory.¹ He suggested that the oldest dedications were the ones which were dedicated to the native Welsh saints. These original foundations he dated from the fourth to the seventh centuries.² He proposed that the early Church in Wales grew and spread following the same pattern as that of the saints' cults. He suggested that the parishes grew outwards from the early foundations of the saints, with chapels connected to the original foundation being created further afield to cater for those who could not reach the 'mother church'.³ The area that would then become a parish would be defined by the land that was owned by the original ruler or family who gave the land grant to the original foundation.⁴ He proposed that this system of parishes and bishoprics would have been fully developed by the beginning of the seventh century.⁵ Rees' early dating may stem from the fact that he assigned the Welsh saints to the fourth and fifth centuries, rather than the sixth and seventh centuries.

John William Willis Bund was another nineteenth-century scholar to touch on the Welsh saints. He presented a view of a primitive 'Celtic' Church in Wales. In contrast to Rees' theory of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, Bund argued that there was no central authority within Christianity in Wales. He suggested that conversion was strictly on a tribal basis, so there was

¹ R. Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints or the Primitive Christians, usually considered to have been the founders of the churches in Wales* (London, 1836), pp. 56, 62.

² Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, pp. 26-40, 59-69.

³ *Ibid.*, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, pp. 12-14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

no uniformity or uniting governance of practice or belief in Britain. In this model Christians were merely a subordinate subset of the tribe catering to the tribal needs. He also suggested that Christianity in this form was not pure Christianity, but rather a veneer of Christian ideas on pagan practices and customs.⁶ On the subject of saints, he argued that the Welsh saints were not actually saints in the traditional sense as they were not considered holy enough to be recognised by the pope. He suggested that they were just people from certain prominent families who were assigned the name of saint. He also argued that the Welsh saints had no cults as such prior to the Norman Conquest and no native practice of praying to the saints existed.⁷ His view is not accepted by modern scholarship as it ignores all the evidence of the saints' cults and early Christianity in Wales discussed here.

The period following that of the saints was one which saw the rise of the cult of saints. Unfortunately, the scholarship concerning the early Christian Church in Britain and Wales from the nineteenth century tended to concentrate on one particular issue that came from the debates of the Protestant Reformation: whether the Church was independent of Rome or not.⁸ Rees heavily emphasised that the Church in Wales in the early medieval period was completely cut off from that on the Continent and was therefore completely independent from Rome.⁹ Frederick Warren also promoted the idea that the early Church in Wales was independent of the authority of Rome and was completely different in character to the Roman Church. He talked about the way that protestant and Anglican scholars took a different approach to the history of Christianity in Britain than did Catholic scholars.¹⁰ Ebenezer Newell also took the part of the protestant argument, viewing the Synod of Whitby as a contest between the correct Celtic Church and the Catholic Church, characterising the conflict as a struggle for national independence.¹¹ Henry Clarke adamantly stated in the first few pages of his book, *A History of the Church of Wales*, that there was no relationship between the British Church and Rome.¹² Bund was entirely condemnatory of the Catholic Church, arguing for a form of Christianity in early medieval Wales free of 'the iron rule of Rome'.¹³ Not surprisingly, Louis Nedelec, a Roman Catholic priest, took the opposite view, and argued that the original Church in Britain was Catholic in nature and that Christianity had

⁶ J. W. Bund, *The Celtic Church of Wales* (London, 1897), pp. 3-20.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 415-16.

⁸ G. Williams, 'Some Protestant Views of Early British Church History', *History* 38 (1953), pp. 219-33.

⁹ Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, pp. 26, 58.

¹⁰ F.E. Warren, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* (Oxford, 1881), pp. 30, 35-47, 63.

¹¹ E.J. Newell, *A History of the Welsh Church to the Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London, 1895), pp. 98-134.

¹² H.W. Clarke, *A History of the Church of Wales* (London, 1896), p. 3.

¹³ Bund, *The Celtic Church*, pp. 3, 1-6.

even been brought to Britain due to papal influence. He criticized Rees for attempting to promote the idea that Wales had originally been protestant.¹⁴ This dispute between protestant and Catholic scholars coloured much of the scholarship about Christianity in Wales during the nineteenth century.

Much scholarship of the nineteenth century adopted the view of a 'Celtic Church'. In many ways these ideas were linked to the arguments about an early form of Christianity, independent of Rome, being preserved in early medieval Wales and Ireland. Warren defined the Celtic Church as 'the Church which existed in Great Britain and Ireland before the mission of St Augustine.'¹⁵ Bund provided a similar definition of the Celtic Church in Britain and Ireland.¹⁶ The work of both was dominated by the concept of a 'Celtic Church'.

Similarly, Newell refers to the Celtic Church throughout his book. A major problem with this approach was that scholars had then assumed a uniformity across these areas of Ireland, Scotland and Wales and so projected the source material of Ireland onto other areas of the so called 'Celtic Church'. For example, on many occasions Warren used examples from Ireland to demonstrate a point which he then applied to other Celtic areas for which there was no evidence.¹⁷ This view is now outdated but it was a popular concept up to the middle of the twentieth century, and still influences scholarship on the subject.

Scholars of this period argued that Britain was completely Christian by the end of the Roman period. Rice Rees even argues that Christianity was deeply rooted in Britain by the end of the second century.¹⁸ Similarly, Nedelec proposes that at the time of the martyrdoms of Alban, Julius and Aaron in the late third and early fourth centuries there were actually thousands of Christian martyrs in Britain, suggesting that Christianity was extensive in this period.¹⁹ To the scholars of the nineteenth century the picture of Christianity by the seventh century was one of a country that is completely converted, with churches throughout urban areas and a full ecclesiastical hierarchy, with bishops, priests and deacons across the country.²⁰ This hierarchy is evidenced by the attendance of three bishops, a priest and a deacon from Britain at the Council of Arles in 314. Some have even suggested that the third bishop from Britain present at the council came from Caerleon, confirming the presence of Christianity in Wales

¹⁴ L. Nedelec, *Cambria sacra; or, the history of the Early Cambro-British Christians* (London, 1879), pp. 58-60.

¹⁵ Warren, *The Liturgy and Ritual*, p. 3.

¹⁶ Bund, *The Celtic Church*, p. 1.

¹⁷ Warren, *The Liturgy*, pp. 19, 21, 24, 48, etc

¹⁸ Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 82.

¹⁹ Nedelec, *Cambria sacra*, p. 28.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46; E.J. Newell, *A History of the Welsh Church*, p. 4; Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 115.

in the fourth century.²¹ However, it is now generally accepted that the third bishop was actually from Lincoln, dismissing any ideas of an extensive Church organisation in Wales in this period.²²

John Edward Lloyd radically altered studies of Welsh history. He was one of the first to publish a full discussion of the history of Wales. His work provided a new analysis of Christianity and the saints in Wales, ignoring the influence of contemporary religious movements. He dismissed earlier arguments of a primitive Protestant Church in Wales and also the idea of a continuous relationship with Rome from the Roman period through to the medieval period.²³ He was the first to suggest that while Christianity was the dominant religion in the Romanised areas of Britain, the areas that were not subject to Roman influence, like much of Wales, would probably not have been Christian before the fifth century.²⁴ He also provided an analysis of the early saints in Wales in the period he called the 'Age of the Saints'.²⁵ His analysis of the saints concentrated mainly on St Gildas, St Samson, St David and St Cadog, providing a new examination of what could be discovered from the hagiography and other sources concerning the saints. He built on previous work to show how the Church itself developed from the seventh century. Rather than concentrating on issues of the Roman Easter as much previous scholarship had for this period, Lloyd examined the types of churches and communities and how they were organised right up to the tenth century.²⁶

Scholars of the first half of the twentieth century built on the work of Lloyd. There was much more scholarship that concentrated on the saints themselves. Sabine Baring-Gould and John Fisher produced four volumes describing all the saints of Wales and Cornwall, providing details of their Lives and the dedications to them in Britain.²⁷ During this period Arthur Wade-Evans published a translation of much of the hagiography of *Cotton Vespasian A. XIV*, along with a brief analysis of the texts.²⁸ He also analysed the *Llancarfan Charters*,

²¹ Nedelec, *Cambria sacra*, p. 19; Newell, *A History of the Welsh Church*, p. 18; Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 100.

²² J.E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the earliest times to the Edwardian Conquest* Vol I (London, 1911), p. 104; H. Pryce, *J. E. Lloyd and the Creation of Welsh History: Renewing a Nation's Past* (Cardiff, 2011), pp. 146-9; C. Thomas, *Britain and Ireland in Early Christian Times: A.D. 400-800* (London, 1971), p. 78.

²³ Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, pp. 171-7.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-59.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 202-28.

²⁷ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vols. I-IV (London, 1907-13).

²⁸ A.W. Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (Cardiff, 1944); See Background of the Source Material for further discussion of *Cotton Vespasian A. XIV*.

suggesting dates for their composition and the locations they refer to alongside an evaluation of the witnesses.²⁹ His work on the dedications in Wales, organised by the medieval deaneries and dioceses has been incredibly valuable to subsequent scholarship on the dedications of Wales, and is still relied upon by modern scholars.³⁰ However, there were many problems with the work of Wade-Evans. His adamant view that there was continuity of Roman influence in early medieval Wales led him to perpetuate the argument that had been dominant in the nineteenth century, recalling the work of Bund and Newell in order to dispute it and proposed that both Wales and Ireland were always part of the Catholic Church.³¹ There were also problems with his use of sources that made his work difficult for other scholars to use.³²

Gilbert H. Doble further developed the information provided by Baring-Gould and Fisher by creating in depth examinations of the cults of several important saints of Wales. He looked at the cults of St Dyfrig, St Illtud, St Paul of Wales, St Teilo and St Euddogwy. He gave an analysis of the source material available for each saint, including a discussion of the hagiography, and examined many of the traditions surrounding the cults. He also looked at the cults in the landscape, providing details of all the dedications that he thought to have medieval origins.³³ Much of what Doble wrote is still relevant, but some is outdated. Scholars in the early twentieth century still believed in the authenticity of the *Book of Llandaf*, and this has meant that some of the assumptions upon which Doble built his argument on were flawed. For example, when considering St Dyfrig and St Teilo his discussion was based on the assumption that the charters which allegedly recorded grants to them in the *Book of Llandaf* were all authentic.

An entirely new approach to early British Christianity was put forward in the 1950s that influenced scholarship for a long time. The main proponent of this was Victor Nash-Williams. In his work he suggested that the lack of any early fifth-century Christian archaeology in Britain was the result of a cultural break between Roman-Britain and early medieval Britain. He saw Romano-British Christianity as dying out in the post-Roman period and a new Christianity brought in from Gaul in the form of a monastic conversion.³⁴ The

²⁹ A.W. Wade-Evans, 'The Llancarfan Charters', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 87 (1932), pp. 151-165.

³⁰ H. D. Emanuel, 'The Rev. A. W. Wade-Evans: An Appreciation of His Contribution to the Study of Early Welsh History', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1965, p. 260; H. James, 'The geography of the cult of St David: a study of dedication patterns in the medieval diocese' in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 45.

³¹ A.W. Wade-Evans, *Welsh Christian Origins* (Oxford, 1934), pp. 277.

³² Emanuel, 'The Rev. A. W. Wade-Evans', pp. 264-70.

³³ G.H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971).

³⁴ V.E. Nash-Williams, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (Cardiff, 1950), pp. 1, 4.

discontinuity proposed by Nash-Williams was supported by Emrys Bowen. He proposed that there had only ever been Christianity in the highly Romanised south-east of Britain which was then wiped out. Christianity was then reintroduced into Wales through the monastic movement.³⁵

Bowen also introduced an interesting new approach to saints' cults in Wales. He examined the way that saints' cults spread through the country, looking specifically at the dedications of the Welsh and Cornish saints. Bowen suggested that the pattern of dedications to different saints demonstrated the way that the cult dispersed. The saint and his followers would have travelled along the old Roman roads, coastal roads and sea ways in order to spread their cult. Bowen showed how these roadways were an integral part of how cults spread.³⁶ While his view that the dedications of a saint were all made by the actual saint is quite outdated, his work on the patterns of dedications is still very relevant today and has influenced the work of modern scholars like Heather James.³⁷

The idea of the Celtic Church continued in the twentieth century. Unlike in the nineteenth century, the Celtic Church was not viewed as a form of protestant Christianity separate from Rome, but rather just the Church as it developed in Celtic areas of Britain and Ireland. This was characterised by the assumption that Christianity in western Britain and Ireland were of a united native culture: a Celtic Church with its own form of Celtic Christianity. Nora Chadwick emphasised that the Celtic Church developed differently to the Church on the continent. Unfortunately, because of this view she based a lot of her discussion on Irish sources but applied them to Christianity in Wales.³⁸ This characterisation of Christianity is widely rejected by modern scholarship. The idea of a Celtic Church sharing the same organisation and beliefs is an entirely modern concept that has been projected back onto the period.³⁹ While there clearly were links between Ireland and western Britain during the period in question it does not mean that the idea of a Celtic Church should be supported, and

³⁵ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1954), pp. 14-15.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 40, 53, 56, 60.

³⁷ H. James, 'The cult of St. David in the Middle Ages', in M. Carver (ed.), *In Search of Cult* (Woodbridge, 1993); James, 'The geography of the cult of St David'.

³⁸ N. Chadwick, *The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church* (London, 1961), pp. 63, 71, 116, etc.

³⁹ Thomas, *Britain and Ireland*, p. 75.

sources for Ireland cannot be projected onto Wales.⁴⁰ However, discussions of ‘Celtic’ Christianity still persist in scholarship regarding Wales and Ireland.⁴¹

Kathleen Hughes gave a new interpretation of *Cotton Vespasian A. XIV*. She looked at how the contents of the manuscript could be used to study the period in which it was produced. She also argued that the hagiography was collected by Gloucester Cathedral and that the manuscript was produced at Monmouth.⁴² Her view was followed by Christopher Brooke who also argued that Gloucester was responsible for collecting the Lives and charters for the manuscript.⁴³ Their analysis of the manuscript laid the groundwork for the material to be used as a source for the events of twelfth century which led to the compilation of the manuscript.

The initial research of Wendy Davies concentrated on an entirely new interpretation of the *Book of Llandaf*. She examined the charters of the *Book of Llandaf* and determined which ones represented genuine grants and which were forgeries by Llandaf. She used this information to provide a more credible source for the early history of the Church in Wales.⁴⁴ In her re-examination of the history of medieval Wales, Davies devoted two chapters to an analysis of the Church and Christianity in Wales. She updated the work of Bowen, suggesting that there were early monasteries in Wales, but not on the same scale suggested by the hagiography, and that many foundations reflected the later popularity of a cult.⁴⁵ In another chapter she examined the evidence for saints. She suggested that the earliest saints were characterised by their ascetic lives, self denial and confrontation of evil.⁴⁶ She also discussed the local nature of many saints and how the cult of a saint often developed from this through the popularity of the saint.⁴⁷

The work of Thomas Charles-Edwards has been important for giving the most recent in-depth analysis of medieval Wales. Within this study he looked at the organisation of the Church and

⁴⁰ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064* (Oxford, 2013), p. 187; W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1982), p. 141.

⁴¹ I. Bradley, *Celtic Christianity: Making myths and chasing dreams* (Edinburgh, 1999); D.E. Meek, *The Quest for Celtic Christianity* (Edinburgh, 2000); S. Victory, *The Celtic Church in Wales* (London, 1977).

⁴² K. Hughes, ‘British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV (*Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*): its purpose and provenance’, in K., Hughes (ed.), *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1980), pp. 53-66.

⁴³ C. Brooke, ‘St. Peter of Gloucester and St Cadoc of Llancarfan’, in N. Chadwick et al (eds.), *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 258-322.

⁴⁴ W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978); W., Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979).

⁴⁵ Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 141-68.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-7.

the cults of the Welsh saints. His work provides the basis for much modern scholarship concerning medieval Wales. Much of his work concentrated on the episcopal organisation of the Church in medieval Wales. He showed how the *ecclesia* and *parochia* of Britain were very different from their counterparts in Gaul during the early medieval period.⁴⁸ He also suggested that within Dyfed there were seven bishops, one for each *cantref* in a similar way to the organisation in Ireland.⁴⁹ Importantly, he examined the development of saints' cults, showing the significance of the relationships portrayed in the hagiography between saints. These relationships, he suggested, could show alliances between the cults of different saints.⁵⁰

Much of the most recent scholarship on the Church and the saints of early medieval Wales has focused on Llandaf. J.R. Davies analysed the *Llandaf Charters*, looking at what they showed about Llandaf in the twelfth century when they were compiled, and what could be seen about the development of the cults of St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy at Llandaf. In his studies of saints' cults, John Reuben Davies focused on the cults of St Teilo and St Dyfrig.⁵¹ His book on Llandaf touches on the cults of other saints, but only when they appear in relation to Llandaf. For example, he talks a lot about Caradog of Llancarfan, but only to allow him to ultimately argue that Caradog was the author of the *Book of Llandaf*.⁵² Most recently Ben Guy has provided new evidence for the cult of St Dyfrig at Moccas. He used the *Life of St Dyfrig* from the *Book of Llandaf* and the charters attached to it to show a connection between St Dyfrig and the area of Moccas and to suggest a previous cult in the area and the possibility of a group of lost charters from Moccas that were appropriated by Llandaf.⁵³ The most recent study on the Book of Llandaf was completed by Patrick Sims-Williams. This study concentrates on a re-examination of the charters and the construction of the *Book of Llandaf*. While there is little examination of the hagiography found in the *Book of Llandaf*, he does use the charters to show how land grants to the cults of St Dyfrig and St Teilo developed over the period.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 583-98.

⁴⁹ T.M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Seven Bishop-Houses of Dyfed', *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 24.3 (1971), pp. 247-62.

⁵⁰ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 614-22.

⁵¹ J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 366-74.

⁵² J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 105-8, 132-42.

⁵³ B. Guy, 'The *Life of St Dyfrig* and the Lost Charters of Moccas (Mochros), Herefordshire' in *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 75 (2018), pp. 1-37.

⁵⁴ P. Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source* (Woodbridge, 2019), pp. 50-70.

The *Book of Llandaf* is one of the few substantial extant sources for medieval Wales. The charters and hagiography show a lot about Llandaf during this period. It is only natural, then, that scholarship should focus on this material. However, it does mean that the cults of other saints have not received the same kind of attention as the cults of St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy.

A recent study on St David and his cult provided an extensive overview of the subject.⁵⁵ The study looked at aspects of the cult in the landscape, the hagiography, evidence for the cult of St David, relics associated with the saint, and the development of the diocese of St Davids. James was able to build on the work of Bowen to create a new study on how a cult grew in the landscape. She proposed that a cult grew through the creation of a holy landscape connected to a saint. Incidents concerning the saint would be linked to topographical features. This would attract pilgrims, who would in turn encourage the foundation of further chapels to the saint in the area.⁵⁶ Her description highlighted the way that saints were connected to sites within the landscape and the importance of topography for the study of saints' cults. Richard Sharpe and J.R. Davies analysed the manuscript variations of the *Life of St David* and have suggested that the *Cotton Vespasian A. XIV* version of the text was closer to the original vita by Rhygyfarch than the Digby or Nero recensions. They also provided an accurate English translation.⁵⁷ The approach of this study to the cult of St David gives an insight to the way the cult developed over the early medieval period and beyond. It also shows the way that the topography and hagiography can highlight different aspects of the cult.

The scholarship concerning the ecclesiastical landscape and the saints' cults of south Wales has been limited. Modern scholarship has tended to focus on Llandaf or the cult of St David. The last in-depth analysis of the saints' cults of south Wales was by Doble in the 1930s. Studies of Welsh medieval history have progressed a lot since this time, with new interpretations of the source material now available. Previous detailed scholarship about the saints' cults of medieval Wales have tended to consider each cult in isolation- the cults of St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy have sometimes been studied together, but only in relation

⁵⁵ W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007).

⁵⁶ James, 'The cult of St. David in the Middle Ages', p. 105; James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', pp. 41-83.

⁵⁷ *Vita Sancti David*, in R. Sharpe & J.R. Davies (trans.) 'Rhygyfarch's 'Life' of St David' in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 107-55; J.R. Davies, 'Some observations on the "Nero", "Digby", and "Vespasian" recensions of *Vita S David*', in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 156-60; R. Sharpe, 'Which text is Rhygyfarch's *Life* of St. David?', in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 90-106.

to their connection to each other as the patron saints of Llandaf. There has been little examination about how the saints' cults compare with each other and what they show about the ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales as a whole. Similarly, scholarship concerning the saints and ecclesiastical landscape of Celtic-speaking areas, Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Brittany, has tended to focus on the areas where there is more surviving source material, like Ireland. Although the idea of a Celtic Church is long outdated, there has been a tendency to assume that what is true of one area is also true of Wales. This is seen even in the work of J.R. Davies when he used the evidence of the *Tripartite Life of St Patrick* to show the topography of Ireland and then applied the same model of topographical development to Wales.⁵⁸

There are a number of aims for this study. Firstly, it will build on the work completed by Doble on the saints of south Wales to produce a new, up to date examination of the development of these saints' cults. The investigation will be limited to the period between the end of the sixth century and the end of the twelfth century: from the period that the saints were active up to the period that the Normans took control over south Wales. Due to the scope of the research, I will concentrate on the major saints' cults of south Wales only. The cult of St David has already been examined recently, so further analysis here would not add to the subject. I will look at the cults of SS. Cadog, Illtud, Teilo and Dyfrig, four of the most prominent saints in south Wales during this period. These cults have also been chosen as each one represents different ways in which saints' cults in south Wales developed: the cult of St Cadog is a good example of a cult that grew in importance across the period; the cult of St Illtud was very prominent at the beginning of the period but does not seem to have wielded the same power by the end of it; the cult of St Teilo is an example of a cult that prospered early in the period, but declined to the point of being reculted by the end; the cult of St Dyfrig is another example of the process of reculting in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but it did not have the same status as the cult of St Teilo and so shows how a relatively minor saint's cult was reculted by a powerful foundation. Each chapter on the individual saints' cults will address similar points for each cult, to allow for easier comparison. The recent analysis of the cult of St David shows how the combination of hagiography, historiography, topography and archaeology can provide greater insight into the history of this period. This study will therefore bring together a number of different approaches in a similar way in order to create a better examination of the saints' cults of south Wales in this period. For each saint's cult

⁵⁸ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', pp. 392-5.

relationships that were created, maintained or fabricated by the foundations of the cult will be examined, using the genealogical material, the hagiography and the charters. The presence of the cult in the landscape will be analysed by looking at the topology, the hagiography, charter material and evidence of stone monuments. The relics of the cults will also be examined to show the status of the foundations and the role they played in the ecclesiastical customs of the period. The chapters on SS. Cadog, Teilo and Dyfrig will also briefly examine the changes that occurred in the cult during the twelfth century, as shown by new Lives of the saints composed during this period.

The second aim of this study is to examine how the individual saints' cults compare with each other and what they can show about the development of the ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales as a whole during the medieval period. As mentioned above, saints' cults are often considered individually. A comparison of the cults allows for a greater understanding of the differences and similarities between the different cults. It also highlights the reasons these similarities and differences existed, and how they impacted the overall success or failure of a saint's cult in south Wales during this period.

The final aim of this thesis is to then compare the ways that the saints' cults of south Wales developed to the saints' cults from other areas of the Insular world in order to show the differences between them. As the main focus of this research has been to examine the way that the saints' cults of south Wales developed, the comparison with the cults of the Insular world can only be brief. It will address one major cult from each Ireland, Western Scotland, England and Brittany. Although a single cult cannot be representative of all the cults of a country, the purpose of the chapter is to highlight the basic differences between the saints' cults of south Wales and these saints' cults, rather than to provide an exhaustive comparison. The saints' cults of Wales are often only considered in isolation or as a minor note that groups it with other Celtic speaking areas, as discussed above. This chapter aims to show why this approach to studying the saints' cults of Wales is flawed and hopes to suggest new ways in which the saints' cults of south Wales should be examined.

Introduction to the Source Material

The source material relating to early medieval Wales is often problematic. Little written material survives from the early years of Christianity and the rise of saints' cults in Wales. The little material that does exist often comes from a much later period than the period in which the saints were reputed to have lived. As this thesis is concerned with the development of saints' cults it will be necessary to address any extant evidence that relates to these cults in this period. Much of the relevant source material comes in the form of saints' Lives. The period following the Norman conquest and settlement in south Wales saw a great increase in Welsh, Irish and English hagiographical texts. Before the eleventh century there were few written saints' Lives from Wales. This chapter will examine the two main sources of pre-Norman saints' Lives, *The Life of Samson of Dol* and the *Historia Brittonum*, and the major early sources for Welsh saints immediately after the Norman Conquest, namely *The Book of Llandaf* and the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*.

The Life of St Samson of Dol

The first *Life of St Samson*, the *Vita I Samsonis*, is one of the earliest saints' Lives about a saint from Wales. It describes the details of St Samson's life both in Britain and Brittany in the sixth century. The Life is split into several sections. The prologue details how the author came by his information. There follows a descriptions of St Samson's birth and childhood, cc. 1-7; his studies and monastic life under St Illtud, cc. 8-19; St Samson's time as a hermit under Piron and his voyages around Britain, cc. 20-39; his period of solitary retreat followed by him becoming an abbot bishop, cc.40-51; and his time spent on the Continent and his role as abbot of Dol, cc. 52-61. Everything up to c. 50 relates to St Samson's time in Wales and Britain, with only the final section actually describing his career in Brittany. This means that even though the life is Breton, it has important implications for early medieval Wales. There are 18 existing manuscripts which contain the *Vita I Samsonis*. Of these only 7 are complete.¹

Most scholarship relating to the *Life of Samson* concerns the date of its composition. Pierre Flobert outlines the two dominant views taken by scholars in the twentieth century. Most supported the view of an early date at the beginning of the seventh century, usually c.610-

¹ P. Flobert, *La Vie Ancienne de Saint Samson de Dol* (Paris, 1997), pp. 43, 90.

615. This is supported by the idea that the prologue sets out a train of transmission of the Life from St Samson's cousin Eunuch to Eunuch's nephew who then told the hagiographer himself. It is suggested that this would place the Life within a generation of the death of Samson. The second view supports a later date in the first half of the ninth century. This view was championed by Fawtier who argued that Samson appeared as a bishop in the Life, but up until the *Martyrology of Usuard* in 865 Samson was described as an abbot.²

Flobert rejected both of these datings and proposed a new hypothesis. He suggested that the Life was composed c. 750-770. He based this on several arguments. Firstly, he suggested that 120-150 years would be a more logical period between the death of St Samson and the date of composition as the intervening people, namely Eunuch and his nephew, were long lived. He also argued that the hagiographer's knowledge of Bede pushed the date back to the mid-eighth century as Bede only died in 735. He proposed that 750 was a reasonable earliest date as it marked the beginning of the period of Carolingian renaissance and coincided with the time of the popularity of the work of Bede.³

However, while Flobert's work is recognised as important scholars have since dismissed his dating. Richard Sowerby and Thomas Charles-Edwards have both rejected Flobert's arguments as 'uncertain' and 'misconceived'.⁴ Sowerby proposed a date at the very end of the seventh century or beginning of the eighth century. His arguments were based on the fact that the Life cites Tigernomalus as the person who requested the Life to be written. In the Annals of Lorsch several notices of deaths are recorded, including one which states '707. Dormitio Tigermali'. Sowerby suggested that this was the Tigernomalus who requested the *Life of St Samson*. This would place the composition before 707.⁵

Charles-Edwards also proposed a date towards the end of the seventh century. He argued that Samson's foundation of Pennetale was described as being in *Romania*, a part of the southern side of the English Channel that lay between *Britannia* and *Francia*. *Romania* ceased to be used after the seventh century, with only references to *Britannia* and *Francia* used for the area after this point. Charles-Edwards argued that the Life could not have been composed

² Ibid., pp. 102-5.

³ Ibid., pp. 104, 109-111.

⁴ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064* (Oxford, 2013), p. 239; R. Sowerby, 'The Lives of St Samson: Rewriting the ambitions of an Early Medieval Cult', *Francia* 38 (2011), p. 21.

⁵ Sowerby, 'The Lives of St Samson', pp. 19-21.

after this date.⁶ A late seventh-century or very early eighth-century date for the composition would therefore make the most sense for the *Life of St Samson*.

Another important analysis of the Life of St Samson was completed by Elizabeth Krajewski. Her thesis analysed the historical context of the composition of the Life of St Samson while also examining the hagiographical and biblical motifs present in the text.⁷ In this way she shows the theological significance of the text as well as the historical. This approach is important to consider as it highlights the influence of religious texts on hagiographical production: hagiographical texts were primarily religious in nature. Krajewski highlights the importance of biblical motifs within the Life of St Samson as being elements that would be familiar and appeal to the monks of Dol, the intended audience of the text.⁸

The *Life of St Samson* is important for several reasons. Even though it was written in Brittany it still represents the earliest Life of a saint from Britain. The descriptions of his time and travels in Wales provide an insight into the state of monasticism and the growth of saints' cults in the early period. It is also significant because it shows the position of prominent saints like St Illtud and St Dyfrig and how they were perceived by a late seventh-century monastic audience in Brittany. The topography of the Life also gives an important glimpse at the geography of religious life in early medieval Wales. These are all topics which require more in depth research.

Historia Brittonum

The *Historia Brittonum* is a Welsh history of Britain. It tells the history of Britain and the Brittonic people from its earliest origins up to the ninth century, when it was written. Dumville has described it as an historical synthesis of Britain comparable to the Irish *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, 'The Book of the Invasion of Ireland'.⁹ The *Historia* is a composite text split into several main sections. These are generally categorised as the Ages of the World; the British and Irish origins; Roman Britain; Post-Roman Britain; St Patrick; Arthur; the Genealogies of the English kings; the Northern history; the 28 cities of Britain; and the

⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 238-9.

⁷ E.M.G. Krajewski, *Archetypal Narratives: Towards a Theological Appreciation of Early Celtic Hagiography* (PhD Thesis, University of Wales Trinity St David, 2015), pp. 43-105.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹ D. Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the "Historia Brittonum"', *Arthurian Literature* VI (1986), pp. 5-6.

Marvels of Britain.¹⁰ These sections vary between manuscripts, both in order and in content. The *Historia* includes events all over the British Isles: Charles-Edwards rightly comments that it is ‘more a history of the Britons than of Britain’.¹¹

One of the major difficulties with the *Historia Brittonum* is the sheer number of copies. In 1938 when Arthur W. Wade-Evans published his translation of the text he knew of only 11 manuscripts versions.¹² There are now thought to be approximately 35 manuscripts of the *Historia*.¹³ Of these manuscripts one appears in Irish and the rest in Latin, and they all show variations. These manuscripts are split into eight recensions. These are defined by Dumville as the Chartres, Durham, Gildasian, Harleian, Irish, Nennian, Sawley and Vatican recensions.¹⁴ The main recensions are the Harleian, Nennian and Vatican recensions.

The Harleian recension is the earliest of the *Historia Brittonum* and considered to be the one that best preserves the original text.¹⁵ The group consists of four manuscripts, but the recension is named after its primary manuscript, *British Library, Harleian 3859*.¹⁶ The Harleian manuscript is the only manuscript to contain the full text of the *Historia Brittonum* and is therefore generally considered to be the best manuscript of the text.¹⁷ The manuscript also contains the *Annales Cambriae* and the Welsh Genealogies added to the end. These texts are secondary, added during the reign of Hywel Dda, c.950-88, and not considered contemporary with the *Historia* text.¹⁸ Wade-Evans dated the manuscript to the twelfth century, though he suggested that it was a copy written c.1100 of a mid-tenth century manuscript.¹⁹ More recent scholarship has agreed that the manuscript is a copy of an earlier version. Dumville proposed that the original composition dated to c. 829-30.²⁰ This dating has been followed by subsequent scholarship concerning the *Historia Brittonum*.²¹

¹⁰ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 439-40; J. Morris, *Nennius: British History and The Welsh Annals* (London, 1980), pp. 3-4; R. Rowley, *Historia Brittonum: The History of the Britons attributed to Nennius* (Lampeter, 2004), p. 4; A.W. Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'* (London, 1938), p. 13.

¹¹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 438.

¹² Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'*, p. 11.

¹³ Morris, *Nennius: British History*, p. 2.

¹⁴ Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum* (Cambridge, 1985), p. xx.

¹⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 437.

¹⁶ D. Dumville, ‘“Nennius” and the *Historia Brittonum*’, *Studia Celtica* 10-11 (1975), p. 78.

¹⁷ D. Dumville, ‘Some aspects of the Chronology of the *Historia Brittonum*’, *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* XXV (1974), p. 439; Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 2; Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'*, p. 13.

¹⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438.

¹⁹ Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'*, pp. 11, 13.

²⁰ Dumville, ‘The Historical Value of the “*Historia Brittonum*”’, p. 5.

²¹ Morris, *Nennius: British History*, p. 1; Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 1.

The Nennian recension is one which has had much attention in modern scholarship. The reasons for this concentration will be discussed below. There are 5 surviving manuscripts that belong to the Nennian recension of the *Historia Brittonum*. These are *Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS.139*, *Durham Cathedral, MS.B.2.35*, *British Library, MS. Burney 310*, *Cambridge University Library, MS.Ff.I.27* and *St John's College, Oxford, MS.99*. Of these the Corpus Christi text is the primary manuscript of the Nennian recension. It was composed in 1164 at the Cistercian Abbey of Sawley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.²² The Corpus Christi manuscript is notable because, of the 182 folios it contains, nearly every single page shows multiple hands, indicating many major alterations and additions.²³ It was originally part of the Gildasian recension, as were all the other manuscripts, before the 'Nennian' changes were added.²⁴

The Irish recension, *Lebor Bretnach*, is also a full copy of the Nennian version of the text.²⁵ As a result of the connection of the Nennian and Irish recensions some suggestions of the provenance of the Nennian text have been made. Charles-Edwards suggested that the original Nennian text would have come from one of two areas: Gwynedd, and therefore became translated as a result of Gwynedd's links with Ireland; or northern Britain, and became translated due to Cumbrian and Scots connections.²⁶ It should be noted that all the Latin manuscript versions of the Nennian recension were produced within the same area of the north-east of England.²⁷ This would support the view that the Nennian recension originated in northern England.

The Vatican recension of the *Historia Brittonum* is named after the manuscript *Vatican Reg.1964*. There are four other manuscripts attributed to this recension: *Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 9768*, *Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 11108*, *Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 8048* and *London British Library MS Additional 11702*.²⁸ Wade-Evans dated the Vatican manuscript to 11th century. He suggested that the manuscript was a copy of an abbreviated copy of the *Historia Brittonum* composed in c.945.²⁹ As with the Harleian recension, Dumville proposed a re-evaluation of the dating of the Vatican manuscript. He

²² Dumville, "'Nennius' and the *Historia Brittonum*", pp. 78-9.

²³ Ibid., p. 79; D. Dumville, 'The Corpus Christi "Nennius"', *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* XXV (1974), pp. 369, 372.

²⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438; Dumville, "'Nennius' and the *Historia Brittonum*", pp. 78-9.

²⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438; Dumville, "'Nennius' and the *Historia Brittonum*", pp. 87-8.

²⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438.

²⁷ Dumville, "'Nennius' and the *Historia Brittonum*", p. 79.

²⁸ Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*, pp. 24-33.

²⁹ Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'*, pp. 11-12.

suggested that the text was composed in the 5th year of the reign of King Edmund of England, c.943-4.³⁰ More recently Charles-Edwards has given a slightly different dating. Although he agrees that the manuscript was from the reign of Edmund, he suggested a slightly broader date range of 939-46.³¹ The Vatican recension is the most abridged of the recensions, leaving out many sections entirely to leave just the core history parts of the *Historia*.³²

The date of the *Historia Brittonum* is somewhat confusing. The primary problem is that we only have later editions of the text and none of the original copies survive. The second problem with dating the text is that the author himself calculated some dates incorrectly. The AD date system created by Dionysius in the sixth century was only introduced into Britain in the eighth century by Bede.³³ Most recently Dumville has based the dating of the text on a section from the prologue of the Harleian recension which states that the *Historia Brittonum* was composed 796 years after the Passion and in the fourth year of the reign of King Merfyn. This would equate with the year c.829.³⁴ This dating has been generally agreed upon by scholars such as Charles-Edwards.³⁵

The *Historia Brittonum* is significant for the fact that the author used many sources for his work which can be identified in the text, through explicit reference and through inferences in the text. The early sections on Roman Britain draw on the *Annals of the Romans*. The section concerning St Germanus expands on the tale found in Constantius' *Life of Germanus* and supposedly is also based on the *Liber Beati Germani*. The section on St Patrick was based on the late seventh-century Irish *Life of St Patrick* by Muirchú Moccu Maicthéni. The section on the Northern history was based on north British annals, particularly 'The Anglian Collection of Genealogies and Regnal Lists' composed c.796. Other sources identified that the author used include Jerome, Eusebius, Isidore, Prosper, Probus, Orosius, Bede, Gildas and the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*.³⁶ For the period that the *Historia Brittonum* was composed this would amount to a major list of sources. It shows that the author not only had access to a great number of

³⁰ Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*, p. 4.

³¹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438.

³² Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*, p. 4.

³³ Dumville, 'Chronology of the *Historia Brittonum*', pp. 439-40; Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, pp. 2-3.

³⁴ Dumville, 'Chronology of the *Historia Brittonum*', p. 439.

³⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 437.

³⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 446; Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the "Historia Brittonum"', pp. 13, 15, 22; Morris, *Nennius: British History*, p. 5; Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 3.

texts, but also that he was capable of reading and understanding Latin, Welsh, Old English and Old Irish.³⁷

The text of the *Historia Brittonum* has been published with translation on a number of occasions. An early nineteenth-century translation was made by Joseph Stevenson in 1838 based on the Harleian recension of the text.³⁸ The major publication of the *Historia Brittonum* of the nineteenth century was by Theodore Mommsen in 1894, a copy which was then republished by Ferdinand Lot in the 1930s.³⁹ Although Wade-Evans published a translation in 1938, Mommsen's edition was the translation that was referred to in scholarship for much of the twentieth century.⁴⁰ John Morris' translation was the next major edition of the text, though his translation was largely based on the work of Edmund Faral.⁴¹ His copy was followed shortly after by a translation of the Vatican recension of the *Historia* by Dumville.⁴² The most recent translation is by Richard Rowley.⁴³

Scholarship concerning the *Historia Brittonum* has been sadly limited. English historians of the early twentieth century regarded the *Historia* as a questionable source and so were reluctant to publish on it.⁴⁴ Scholarship from the later part of the century has largely been dominated by the work of Dumville. He has published extensively on the topic and much subsequent scholarship relies heavily on his work.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, as the majority of the work on the *Historia* comes from Dumville there has been little scope for any real debate. The only subject concerning the *Historia Brittonum* that has been widely discussed is the identity of the author.

The identity of the author of the *Historia Brittonum* is a matter of some debate. Certain recensions and manuscripts have had authors attached to them: the Vatican recension was at one point attributed to a British Bishop known as Mark the Hermit; the manuscripts Vespasian B, Caligula, Nero, Julius, Durham, Royal, Burnley and Arundel were once thought to have been composed by Gildas. Neither of these theories is any longer accepted.⁴⁶

³⁷ Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the "Historia Brittonum"', p. 21.

³⁸ Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 2.

³⁹ Dumville, 'The Historical Value of the "Historia Brittonum"', pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438; Wade-Evans, *Nennius's 'History of the Britons'*; I. Williams, 'Mommsen and the Vatican Nennius', *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* XI (1944).

⁴¹ E. Faral, *La Légende Arthurienne* Vol. 3 (Paris, 1929); Morris, *Nennius: British History*.

⁴² Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*.

⁴³ Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*.

⁴⁴ Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*, p. 3.

⁴⁵ See bibliography for full list of D. Dumville's publications on the topic.

⁴⁶ Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 2.

Traditionally the *Historia Brittonum* has been attributed to the author known as Nennius. This is because of the prologue found in the manuscripts of the Nennian recension which ascribes the author as ‘Ninnius, disciple of St Elfoddw’. Elfoddw is understood to mean the archbishop of Gwynedd of the same name found in the *Annals Cambriae* who died c.809.⁴⁷ An early Welsh manuscript attributed to ‘Nemnius’ from 817 is believed to be the same person.⁴⁸

In the early twentieth century two views about Nennius were prevalent. One suggested that Nennius composed a number of recensions before adding his prologue to the last, which then became the Nennian recension. The second was that the prologue was missing from the primary recension due to an abridgement of the text.⁴⁹ It was believed that Nennius was the author of the *Historia Brittonum* until Dumville published his new approach to the authorship of the text. He analysed the evidence which suggested that Nennius was the author and showed that it could not be genuine. The period that Nennius belonged to was much earlier than the copies which were ascribed to him, and the earliest copies which were contemporary with Nennius did not contain the prologue which named him as author. Dumville suggested that the prologue was a later addition to the text, probably made in the mid-eleventh century, by someone who believed that Nennius was the author.⁵⁰ Dumville’s argument has been accepted by scholars like Charles-Edwards but there are still those who cling to the tradition that Nennius was the author of the *Historia Brittonum*.⁵¹

The central section concerning St Germanus has important implications. This section describes the conflict between Germanus and Vortigern, and shows the origins of the new dynasty of Powys that was created as a result. This section clearly indicated that there was a strong connection between the ruling dynasty of Powys and the cult of St Germanus in the ninth century: Germanus is shown to be blessing the ancestor of the dynasty.⁵² This would suggest that he was the main saint of Powys in the period. Dumville also suggested that the text has important implications for Welsh hagiography in general. He suggested that the style of composition was characteristic of other Celtic hagiography from the period, which he

⁴⁷ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 438; Dumville, “‘Nennius’ and the *Historia Brittonum*”, p. 90.

⁴⁸ Dumville, “‘Nennius’ and the *Historia Brittonum*”, p. 90.

⁴⁹ Dumville, ‘The Historical Value of the “*Historia Brittonum*”’, p. 4.

⁵⁰ Dumville, “‘Nennius’ and the *Historia Brittonum*”, pp. 91-94.

⁵¹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 437; P.J.C. Field, ‘Nennius and his History’ *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996), pp. 159-65; Morris, *Nennius: British History*, pp. 1-7; Rowley, *Historia Brittonum*, p. 1.

⁵² Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 451; Dumville, ‘The Historical Value of the “*Historia Brittonum*”’, p. 12.

proposed would imply that the practice of writing hagiography was wide spread in ninth-century Wales. He neatly surmised: ‘This should, I think, give an impetus to the critical study of the surviving vitae of ca 1100, to see how ideas of the saints, and the claims of their churches developed in this three-hundred-year period.’⁵³

The Book of Llandaf

The *Book of Llandaf* is a collection of texts pertaining to the history, rights and privileges of the see of Llandaf. It is essentially a book containing a gospel, a series of saints’ Lives and documents, mostly charters. The book opens with the Gospel of St Matthew. This is followed by the *Life of St Elgar the Hermit* and the *Life of St Samson*. The next section of the book is a collection of texts, mainly letters and papal bulls, connected with the legal campaign of Bishop Urban from 1126-32. The section which proceeds this is concerned with the founding of Llandaf and its first bishops. It contains the *Life of St Dyfrig*, the supposed founder of Llandaf, the *Life of St Teilo*, the second bishop of Llandaf, and the Life of his nephew and successor, St Euddogwy. Each Life is appended by a list of charters with grants and privileges attributed to each saint. The last section of the *Book of Llandaf* contains the rest of the charters which document other grants made to Llandaf and its bishops, and a chronology of the bishops of Llandaf up to the time of Urban.⁵⁴

It is important from the outset that the *Book of Llandaf* is considered within the context of the reign of Bishop Urban of Llandaf. Urban was consecrated to the see of Glamorgan in 1107 and began building a new church at Llandaf in 1120.⁵⁵ For the fifteen years prior to his death he was engaged in disputes with the dioceses of St Davids and Hereford over boundaries and estates that Urban claimed belonged to the see of Llandaf.⁵⁶ Despite what the text of the *Book of Llandaf* might suggest, there was no see at Llandaf until the time of Urban. It is generally considered that the text was composed with the purpose of legitimising the claims of Urban,

⁵³ Dumville, ‘The Historical Value of the “Historia Brittonum”’, p. 22.

⁵⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 245-6; J.G. Evans, & J. Rhys, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv Reproduced from the Gwysaney Manuscript* (Oxford, 1893).

⁵⁵ W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979), p. 2.

⁵⁶ J.R. Davies, ‘The Book of Llandaf: A Twelfth-Century Perspective’, *Anglo-Norman Studies XXI* (1998), p. 31.

which was done by the editing of texts to favour Llandaf and its bishops.⁵⁷ It is important to remember this when considering any part of the text.

The *Book of Llandaf*, the *Liber Landavensis*, is a Latin manuscript produced at Llandaf to record the see's history and rights. There have been copies made but the original is held in the National Library of Wales: *National Library of Wales MS 17110E*. The manuscript consists of 336 columns and contains 158 charters.⁵⁸ The manuscript remained at Llandaf until the seventeenth century and it was acquired by the National Library of Wales in the twentieth century.⁵⁹

For a long time the location of the original manuscript was not known. An edition of the book was published in 1840 by Rev. William J. Rees, but he had to base this on two thirteenth-century copies so it was inaccurate.⁶⁰ It was not until 1868 when a description of the manuscript was published by A.W. Haddan that the location of the original was generally known. A second edition of the text, based on the National Library of Wales manuscript, or the 'Gwysaney manuscript' as it was then known, was published in 1893 by J. Gwenogvryn Evans and J. Rhys.⁶¹ This edition was the first full publication of the original text and has remained as the basis for modern-day study of the *Book of Llandaf*.⁶²

There are four main debates in modern scholarship concerning the *Book of Llandaf*. These cover the date of composition, the identity of the author, the analysis of the hands that wrote the manuscript and the authenticity of the charters. There is a close link between the date and authorship in much scholarship, as shall be seen. The manuscript is generally dated to the twelfth century. As already discussed, this places the composition of the text into the period surrounding the dispute of Bishop Urban. Haddan suggested in his description of the manuscript that it was composed during the time that Urban was bishop of Llandaf, so between 1107 and 1134.⁶³ Evans and Rhys suggested that the manuscript was dated to c.1150, after the death of Urban, but before the end of the reign of King Steven.⁶⁴ This dating

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 31; J.R. Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: Its Date and the Identity of its Editor', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* XXV (1998), p. 11.

⁵⁸ W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978), p. 3.

⁵⁹ Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 1.

⁶¹ Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: Its Date and the Identity of its Editor', p. 1.

⁶² Ibid., p. 1; Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 1; D. Huws, 'The Making of *Liber Landavensis*', *The National Library of Wales Journal* XXV No.2 (1987), p. 133.

⁶³ Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: Its Date and the Identity of its Editor', p. 7.

⁶⁴ Evans, & Rhys, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv*, p. xix.

was followed in the work of Sabine Baring-Gould and John Fisher in the early twentieth century.⁶⁵

The work of Wendy Davies provided the first detailed analysis of the *Book of Llandaf*. She proposed that the manuscript was dated to the 12th century, with a probable date of composition as c.1120-29. 1120 marks the date when Urban started the construction of his new church at Llandaf. As the text was composed in the context of Urban's legal disputes over Llandaf, she suggested that the text would not have been composed before Urban had fully established Llandaf as the centre of the see. The charters also contain certain properties which were lost by Llandaf in 1133: it is unlikely that they would have been included after this date.⁶⁶

John Reuben Davies based his evaluation of the date of the *Book of Llandaf* on similar criteria to W. Davies. He suggested that the composition would probably not have been after 1132 as the outcomes of the court cases of 1132 and 1133 were not included in the documents pertaining to the suit of Urban, and nor was the final papal bull from 1134. This would suggest that the text was compiled before any of these documents were created. His lower limit for the date reflects that of W. Davies.⁶⁷ He later expanded the date limit, suggesting that it could have been as late as 1134, the year that Urban died.⁶⁸ J.R. Davies, therefore, placed the date of the *Book of Llandaf* at c.1120-1134. More recent work by Charles-Edwards has agreed with the dates suggested by J.R. Davies, and it is this date followed in this thesis.⁶⁹

The identity of the author closely matches scholars' arguments over the date of the *Book of Llandaf*. Evans and Rhys, who proposed a date of 1150, suggested that the author was Geoffrey of Monmouth. They suggest that the documents were gathered by Urban during his life time, but that it was Geoffrey who later composed them.⁷⁰ In this way the date they proposed reflects who they thought to be the author. However, while Baring-Gould and Fisher accepted the dating of Evans and Rhys, they rejected the idea that Geoffrey was the

⁶⁵ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. II (London, 1908), p. 359; S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV (London, 1913), pp. 28, 226.

⁶⁶ Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: Its Date and the Identity of its Editor', pp. 8-11.

⁶⁸ Davies, 'The Book of Llandaf: A Twelfth-Century Perspective', p. 31.

⁶⁹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 245.

⁷⁰ Evans, & Rhys, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv*, pp. xviii, xx.

author. They argued that Geoffrey's version of the *Life of Dyfrig* was very different to the one contained in the *Book of Llandaf* which would make no sense if he has composed both.⁷¹

In contrast to Evans and Rhys, J.R. Davies suggested that the editor of the early texts, including the *Life of St Dyfrig*, was most likely Bishop Urban himself. J.R. Davies proposed a date that was limited by the death of Urban in 1134. He suggested that Urban represented the main editor of the text, who was contemporary with Hand A. The full text of the *Book of Llandaf* was never finished by the primary hands, and he suggested that the reason why the texts from the end of Urban's life were not included was because he was no longer alive to add them.⁷² As with the date, Charles-Edwards has agreed that Urban was most likely the editor as J.R. Davies suggested.⁷³ In more recent work J.R. Davies has further suggested that Caradog of Llancarfan was the author of the *Book of Llandaf* while Urban was the editor.⁷⁴ This judgement is based on the idea that certain words are found in Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* and *Life of St Gildas* which are also found in the Lives of St Illtud, St Gwynllyw and St Tathan, and then further parallel words are found between these Lives and the Lives found in the *Book of Llandaf*.⁷⁵ However, there are two flaws in this argument. Firstly, it seems unlikely that Caradog would have written the *Life of St Illtud* as the portrayal of the meeting of St Cadog and St Illtud that appears in both the *Life of St Illtud* and the *Life of St Cadog* is very different in each Life. The events described in the *Life of St Illtud* seem to directly contradict the *Life of St Cadog*: in the *Life of St Cadog* it is St Cadog who gives St Illtud his tonsure and ordains him but in the *Life of St Illtud* it is St Dyfrig who performs these task.⁷⁶ It seems unlikely that Caradog would have written two pieces of hagiography that disagree with each other in this way. Secondly, Caradog was the head of a school at Llancarfan that was responsible for the production of much of the hagiography of the period. The similarity of words and short phrases cannot be seen as definitive evidence that Caradog wrote the hagiography of the *Book of Llandaf* given that scholars of the school at Llancarfan would naturally have written in a similar style to Caradog. While there could be some possibility that Caradog of Llancarfan was the author of the *Book of Llandaf*, there can be no certainty to this idea.

⁷¹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. II, pp. 362-3.

⁷² Davies, '*Liber Landavensis: Its Date and the Identity of its Editor*', p. 11.

⁷³ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 246.

⁷⁴ J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 132-42.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-41.

⁷⁶ Caradog, §12; *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§3, 7.

There are two central evaluations of the hands that are found in the manuscript text. In their original analysis of the text Evans and Rhys proposed that a number of hands worked on the manuscript which belonged to different periods. They suggested that Hand A, the primary scribe began with column 77. They then suggest a series of hands added to and edited the text. The main text includes hands B, C, Da, Db, E, Fa, Fb, Ia and Ib.⁷⁷ This analysis of the text was accepted for a long time, even by prominent scholars like W. Davies. The first re-evaluation of the text was by Daniel Huws in 1987. He reassigned the hands and simplified the analysis offered by Evans and Rhys. He suggested that Hand A wrote ff.48-111, the last 10 of which had previously been ascribed to Hand Db. His Hand B subsumed Hands B, Da, Db (apart from ff.100-110 which have already been mentioned), and Fa of Evans and Rhys. Hand C was responsible for 3 collums on f.37. Huws' Hand E subsumed the previous Hands E and Fb.⁷⁸ These represent the major hands of the text. Charles-Edwards summarises this more simply: Hand A was responsible for the Lives of St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy, and the charters attached to them. Hand B added the Lives of St Elgar and St Sampson, and the documents associated with the dispute of Urban. The other hands were responsible for minor additions and changes.⁷⁹

The *Book of Llandaf* contains a series of charters as part of its central section. There are 158 charters relating to 172 churches and estates which are appended to the Lives of St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy.⁸⁰ The main problem with these charters is that they largely refer to grants made in the period before the existence of a bishopric at Llandaf: it is therefore clear that they were doctored when they were copied.⁸¹ As W. Davies rightly states 'the credibility of the charters must be highly questionable.'⁸² However, she has provided an in depth study of the charters, revealing that they do have some value. She concluded that the material could not have been entirely invented and must have derived from earlier charters. The charters reflected the stylistic characteristics of other early Celtic charter material rather than those of other twelfth-century forgeries.⁸³

⁷⁷ Evans, & Rhys, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv*, p. xviii.

⁷⁸ Huws, 'The Making of *Liber Landavensis*', pp. 143-146.

⁷⁹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 249.

⁸⁰ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 70; Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 6.

⁸¹ J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 365.

⁸² Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 2.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 6.

W. Davies showed that earlier collections of charters from the south-east of Wales could be identified within the charters found in the *Book of Llandaf*. She found nine different collections which had been assembled at different periods and then collected together in several different stages. Her Group A contained charters 72-77, and included grants mainly in Ergyng from the mid sixth century to the mid ninth century. Group B included charters 121-127 and related to grants in Gwent from the early sixth to the early ninth century. Group C has charters 140-159, with grants from the whole of the south-east and the Gower dating from the early seventh century to the early eighth century. Group D has charters 160-166, with grants in Ergyng and northern Gwent from the late sixth century to the early seventh century. Group E refers to charters 167-174a, relating to grants in Ergyng and Brecon from the mid eighth century to the mid ninth century. Group F contains charters 174b-216b, with grants from the whole of the south-east from the late seventh century to the late ninth century. Group G includes charters 217-224 and related to grants in Gwent and Glamorgan in the mid tenth century. Group H contains charters 225-239 which refer to grants from Gwent, Gloucestershire, Brecon and the Gower from the ninth century to the early tenth century. The final group, Group J, contains charters 240-74 which includes grants in Gwent and Glamorgan from the late tenth century to the late eleventh century.⁸⁴ She suggested that the groups each derived from different major monastic houses in the south-east: Groups A, D and E from the medieval bishopric in Ergyng; Group B from a St Teilo house in Gwent; Groups C and F from Llandeilo Fawr; Group H from the Ergyng bishopric after it had translated to Gwent; Groups G and J from Gwent; and Groups D, E, C and F from Llancarfan.⁸⁵

Several aspects of the charters help to show their validity. A major indication is given by the witnesses that appear in each charter. These witnesses can be confirmed by their appearance in other charters, such as the Llancarfan Charters. Some witnesses are kings and rulers who appear in the Welsh genealogies and others are abbots from other monasteries: these can be confirmed independently of the Llandaf Charters and so suggest the authenticity of the charters which include them.⁸⁶ Those charters contained within the *Braint Teilo* are used as a basis for the charters attached to St Dyfrig and St Euddogwy, suggesting that the St Teilo charters are actually based on original charter material relating to the cult of St Teilo.⁸⁷ This

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 12-13, 23-25.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 91.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 31-82.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 18; Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', pp. 366-67.

is especially important when considering the cult of St Teilo as the charters reveal a lot about the development of the cult over this period.

Scholarship has tended to focus on the charters, so there has been little discussion of the significance of the hagiography in the *Book of Llandaf*. There is significant information that can be noted from them, especially from the Lives of St Dyfrig and St Teilo, such as what they can suggest about the relationships between different saint's cults and the changes that occurred to the cults of St Teilo and St Dyfrig in the twelfth century. Baring-Gould and Fisher noted in their analysis of St Dyfrig that his Life in the *Book of Llandaf* shows how Llandaf was attempting to claim their place as the inheritors of St Dyfrig. Late sixth-century raids into Ergyng destroyed the monasteries of St Dyfrig. The monks fled with their relics. In the twelfth century Llandaf took over the sites dedicated to St Dyfrig and established him as the founder of Llandaf.⁸⁸ No real analysis of the significance of the saints' Lives in the *Book of Llandaf* was completed until the work of J.R. Davies. He expanded on some of the points suggested by Baring-Gould and Fisher. He showed that outside of the *Book of Llandaf* there was no real evidence for dedications to St Dyfrig. As previously suggested, he proposed that there was a process of re-culting in the latter half of the eleventh century, imposing Dyfrig on the churches of Ergyng. This cult was then adopted by Llandaf.⁸⁹

J.R. Davies examined the ways in which the *Life of Dyfrig* was used in order to legitimise the position of Llandaf. The inclusion of St Dyfrig is important because he establishes the primacy of Llandaf in Wales through his consecration as the first bishop of Wales by St Germanus of Auxerre. This primacy is further accentuated by St Dyfrig's visit to St Illtud in the Life: it serves to undermine Llanilltud Fawr, by showing superiority of St Dyfrig. The life is also used to legitimise the charters associated with St Dyfrig. The Life provides a list of 20 disciples of St Dyfrig. Those named are either linked to St Dyfrig or appear in the charters as patrons of churches 'granted' to Llandaf or as clerical witnesses to other grants.⁹⁰

A similar case of scholarship can be shown for St Teilo. Baring-Gould and Fisher first analysed the Life at the beginning of the twentieth century, showing how Llandaf used the Life to establish claims of St Teilo churches from St Davids.⁹¹ The importance of the St Teilo texts was first suggested by W. Davies. She noted that the privileges and rights given to St

⁸⁸ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. II, p. 362.

⁸⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 86.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 79-83.

⁹¹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV, p. 226.

Dyfrig and St Euddogwy in the *Book of Llandaf* were based on the privileges of St Teilo, documented in the *Braint Teilo* section of the text. She suggested that this part of the text may have been based on an earlier set of privileges to St Teilo from the 11th century, which were then incorporated into the *Book of Llandaf*.⁹² J.R. Davies also suggested that the *Life of Teilo* itself was from an earlier date than the composition of the *Book of Llandaf*. The Life is much less preoccupied with properties and territory claims than the other Lives contained in the *Book of Llandaf*, suggesting that it was not originally created to be in the collection. He suggested that the Life came from an earlier *Life of Teilo* preserved in *British Library, MS Cotton Vespasian A. XIV*. This combined with the list of churches of Teilo in Dyfed suggests that there was a set of churches with its own privileges originally associated with the cult of Teilo which Llandaf was then attempting to claim. It also shows that while at one point the cult of Teilo had a distinct set of churches and rights, by the 12th century it was so diminished that Llandaf was easily able to appropriate it.⁹³

Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium

A large collection of Welsh saints' Lives is found in the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*, the manuscript *British Library MS Cotton Vespasian A. XIV* (hereafter Vespasian). The manuscript was written in c. 1200. It is made up of a calendar of saints, a Cornish glossary, the text of *de situ Brecheniauc*, a list of contents, and a series of saint's Lives. Most of these Lives are of Welsh saints, but two are Irish.

Vespasian was composed by a series of Anglo-Norman hands at the beginning of the thirteenth century. The calendar is the first element found in the collection, though possibly the last to be added. Silas Harris wrote that the calendar 'evidently forms an integral part of the compilation',⁹⁴ though it seems to have been added at the end of the process of compilation rather than being an 'integral' part of it. While Harris argued that the calendar was probably written soon after 1174 when St Bernard, the latest saint of the calendar, was canonised, two factors show that the calendar was composed after the rest of Vespasian.⁹⁵ Firstly, the scribe who wrote the calendar also wrote the last Lives in the collection, so it

⁹² Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 18.

⁹³ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 369; Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 86-9.

⁹⁴ S. Harris, 'The Kalendar of the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium* (Vespasian A XIV)', *Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales* III (1953), p. 3.

⁹⁵ Harris, 'The Kalendar', p. 4.

could not have been written at any earlier stage of the composition.⁹⁶ Secondly, as Harris himself points out, the dates in the calendar that correspond to the saints whose Lives also appear in the manuscript have been taken from the *Capitula* rather than the Lives themselves.⁹⁷ Since the collection contains so many Lives, written in a number of different hands, the contents was probably composed after the Lives had been completed. Both these facts suggest that the calendar was probably one of the last parts to be added to the manuscripts. The calendar itself is surprisingly sparse, containing only 84 commemorations.⁹⁸

The second section of Vespasian is a Latin-Old Cornish glossary. The following section is *De situ Brecheniauc*, a text which was originally from Brycheiniog and copied into the manuscript at a later date. Little has been written about these two sections of the manuscript. The *Capitula* precede the collection of saints' Lives. It lists the saints included and their commemoration dates. The main part of the manuscript follows. It contains a collection of Saints' Lives. These are the *Life of St Gwynllyw*, the *Life of St Cadog* by Lifris, the *Life of St Illtud*, the *Life of St Teilo*, the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, the *Life of St David* by Rhygyfarch, the *Life of St Dyfrig* by Benedict of Gloucester, the *Life of St Brynach*, the *Life of St Padarn*, the *Life of St Clydog*, the *Life of St Cybi*, the *Life of St Tathan*, the *Life of St Carannog*, the life of *St Cybi*, the *Life of St Máedhóg* and the incomplete *Navigation of St Brendan*. The first three Lives, those of St Gwynllyw, St Cadog and St Illtud, have had the most care taken over them. As the collection progressed the care taken by the scribes decreased, with varying hand sizes and changing ink colours.⁹⁹ There appear extensive revisions and marginal additions to the first three Lives, which reduce for the following few Lives, and then there are practically none in the final Lives.¹⁰⁰

The original provenance of Vespasian is unknown. It was found at Brecon Priory in the sixteenth century by Sir John Price, who had been granted the property in 1542. In the seventeenth century it was added to the library of Sir Robert Cotton. At this point the manuscript was bound together with three others and given the shelf mark *Vespasian A*.

⁹⁶ K. Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV (*Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*): its purpose and provenance', in K Hughes, *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1980), p. 57.

⁹⁷ Harris, 'The Kalendar', p. 18.

⁹⁸ Harris, 'The Kalendar', p. 4.

⁹⁹ Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV', p. 65.

¹⁰⁰ Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV', p. 65.

XIV.¹⁰¹ Most of the Lives in the manuscript were printed in 1853 by William Rees. However, his translation was full of mistakes.¹⁰² Another edition of Vespasian was printed by Arthur Wade-Evans in 1944. While this edition was much more reliable it omitted several key parts of the manuscript: the calendar, the glossary, the Lives of St Teilo, St Dyfrig, St Clydog and St Maedóc, and the Navigation of St Brendan. This edition of the Lives of Vespasian has generally been accepted by scholars since, with one exception - the *Life of St David*. This Life was published again by J.W. James in 1967, though this time not based on the Vespasian text. D.S. Evans published the Middle Welsh *Life of St David* in 1988. More recently Richard Sharpe and J.R. Davies have published a new translation of the Life based on the Vespasian text.¹⁰³ Other than the republications of the *Life of St David* no new publications of the Lives in Wade-Evans' edition or of the Lives which he omitted have been completed. A recent project has produced new transcriptions and translations by Ben Guy of the Vespasian Lives of St Teilo, St Dyfrig and St Clydog.¹⁰⁴

Scholarship concerning the Vespasian texts has also been limited. There was some interest in the text in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, as can be seen in the publications of Rees, Phillimore and Wade-Evans. This interest was taken up again in the middle of the twentieth century by scholars like Silas Harris, Kathleen Hughes and Hywel Emanuel. Again, there was a lull in interest, until recent publications by Sharpe and J.R. Davies, though these have mainly been concerned with St David rather than the whole manuscript.

Wade-Evans provided an overview of each of the Lives contained within his volume. Oddly, the Lives in this edition were not published in the order in which they appeared in Vespasian. The first Life is that of St Gwynllyw, a saint from the ancient region of Gwynllwg, located between the lower reaches of the Usk and Rhymni. His principal church is found in Newport along with his wife's, St Gwladus. This Life was based on older material which Wade-Evans suggested was compiled in c.1130 as it uses the old term 'Britons' for the Welsh, but also refers to there being a bishop at Llandaf.¹⁰⁵ The second Life is Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*. The

¹⁰¹ R. Sharpe, 'Which text is Rhygyfarch's *Life of St. David*?', in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 90; A.W. Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (Cardiff, 1944), p. viii.

¹⁰² Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV', p. 53; W. Rees, *Lives of the Cambro British Saints* (Llandovery, 1853).

¹⁰³ See bibliography for details of each text.

¹⁰⁴ 'Vitae Sanctorum Cambriae', *The Cult of Saints in Wales*, <https://saints.wales/theedition/> (accessed, 22/07/2022)

¹⁰⁵ Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p. xii.

Life was composed at St Cadog's principal monastery, Llancarfan, Glamorgan towards the end of the twelfth century. This Life is considered to be significant as the author was educated in a pre-Norman era.¹⁰⁶ The third Life is that of St Illtud. The origins of this Life were probably at Llanilltud Fawr, Glamorgan, which was his principal monastery. Wade-Evans suggested that it was probably written c.1140, after the composition of the *Book of Llandaf* as it mentions St Dyfrig being a bishop of Llandaf.¹⁰⁷ These three Lives are often grouped together as they are all related to St Cadog.

The next two Lives from Vespasian, the *Life of St Teilo* and the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, are not reviewed by Wade-Evans. The next Life in the sequence is Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*. St David's principal foundation was at Mynyw, now St Davids. Wade-Evans suggested that the composition of the *Life of St David* by Rhygyfarch was the inspiration for the compilation of the other Welsh saints' Lives that were written in the period.¹⁰⁸ The next Life, the *Life of St Dyfrig* by Benedict of Gloucester, is also omitted. The next of Wade-Evans' Lives is the *Life of St Brynach* from Cemais, North Pembrokeshire where his main church at Nevern is located. This Life is dated to the late twelfth century due to a reference to St Mary's Church, Newport, at the foot of Carningli.¹⁰⁹ The following Life is the *Life of St Padarn*. The Life probably originally originated from his main foundation at Llanbadarn Fawr, Ceredigion. Wade-Evans suggested it was composed c.1120 as it pre-dates the *Life of Teilo* from the *Book of Llandaf*.¹¹⁰ The *Life of Clydog* is also omitted from the edition. The two different Lives of St Cybi from Vespasian Wade-Evans considers together. Their origin and date are both uncertain. He does suggest that they were more likely to have originated from Llanybi,

Monmouthshire than St Cybi's principal monastery at Caergybi (Holyhead), Anglesey.¹¹¹ The *Life of St Tatheus* follows St Cybi's. The Life was probably written at his principal monastery at Caerwent after 1130, though is based on earlier material.¹¹² The last Lives of Wade-Evans' collection are the two different Lives of St Carannog. They both originate from his main church of Llangrannog, Ceredigion during the early twelfth century. The first of the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. xi.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. xii.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. xii.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. xi.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. xii.

¹¹² Ibid., p. xiii.

Lives was probably composed just after Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*. The second Life was composed slightly later as it reflects the changes in archdeaconal arrangements in

Life	Position in Manuscript	Order in Wade-Evans
St Gwynllyw	f. 13	6
St Cadoc	f. 17	3
St Illtud	f. 43	7
St Teilo	f. 52	-
Llandaf's St Dyfrig	f. 56	-
St David	f. 61	5
Benedict of Gloucester's St Dyfrig	f. 71	-
St Brynach	f. 77v	1
St Padarn	f. 80v	9
St Clydog	f. 84v	-
St Cybi	f. 86	8
St Tatheus	f. 88v	10
St Carannog	f. 93	4
St Cybi	f. 94v	-
St Máedhóg	f. 96v	-
St Brendan	f. 104v	-

Table 1 The Lives of Vespasian A. XIV and A.W. Wade-Evans' *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae*

Ceredigion.¹¹³ The last two Lives of Vespasian are the omitted Irish Lives of St Maedóc and St Brendan.

This analysis by Wade-Evans was generally accepted until the work of Harris in the 1950s. Harris provided a full analysis of the calendar at the beginning of Vespasian. He also provided a new hypothesis on the origins of the Vespasian collection. Robin Flower originally proposed that the manuscript was composed at Brecon Priory because of its Brecknock associations.¹¹⁴ Harris argued that the manuscript was more likely to have been written at Monmouth Priory. His main reasoning was that the calendar at the beginning of

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. xi-xii.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. x.

Vespasian contained a dedication to an obscure French saint, St Dochlinus. St Dochlinus was the patron saint of a church in Anjou that was connected to the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Florent-de-Saumur, Saumur. The only daughter church of the abbey in Britain during the period that Vespasian was written was Monmouth Priory. Harris reasoned that Vespasian must have been composed at Monmouth to have included a reference to such an obscure saint.¹¹⁵

He also suggested that the content of the manuscript reflected the interests of Monmouth. The monks of Monmouth used the nearby church of St Cadog while their new priory was being constructed. Harris suggested this was the impetus for collecting the first three Lives of the collection which all relate to St Cadog.¹¹⁶ Many of the other Lives relate to the areas around Monmouth: there were numerous churches to St David, St Teilo and St Dyfrig in Brycheiniog and Erging; there were also foundations of St Clydog, St Cybi and St Tatheus in Llangybi and Caerwent respectively.¹¹⁷ Harris proposed that the other Lives may have come from St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester. He highlights the relationship between the two foundations, noting the presence of members of St Peter's attending the dedication of the new priory at Monmouth and the inclusion of a Life in Vespasian that was written at Gloucester.¹¹⁸

This theory of Vespasian originating from Monmouth and having links with Gloucester was strongly supported by Kathleen Hughes. Hughes considered Flowers' theory but dismissed it saying that 'the arguments are not decisive.'¹¹⁹ She agreed with Harris that Vespasian was connected to both Monmouth and Gloucester. However, she gave Gloucester a much more prominent role, suggesting that the Lives were originally collected by Gloucester and then copied at Monmouth to create Vespasian.¹²⁰ Her arguments for the connection to Monmouth paralleled those of Harris. She concluded that the knowledge of St Dochlinus could only have come from Monmouth.¹²¹

She then argued that Gloucester had connections with different areas of Wales which would explain the various saints that appear in the manuscript. Over the course of the twelfth century Gloucester received many grants of churches and monasteries in Wales. Gloucester owned Llanbadarn Fawr, the principal foundation of St Padarn c.1115-1136. Hughes

¹¹⁵ Harris, 'The Kalendar', pp. 6-11.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 11, 22.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹⁹ Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton Vespasian A. XIV', p. 54.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 63.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 54-56.

suggested that Gloucester gained not just the *Life of Padarn* through this connection, but also those of his close neighbours, St Brynach, St Carannog and St Cybi.¹²² Similarly, Gloucester was granted Llancarfan c.1095-1104, the period that followed Lifris' composition of the *Life of St Cadog*. Gloucester also owned the main church of Cadog's father, St Gwynllyw.¹²³ This would have given Gloucester access to the Lives of St Cadog and St Gwynllyw. Hughes suggested that the friendly relationship between the abbots of St Davids and Gloucester would have given them easy access to Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*. She also suggested that they may have obtained the two Irish Lives from St Davids: the two Lives were used by Rhygyfarch at the end of the eleventh century so would have been easily available for the collection.¹²⁴ In this argument Gloucester acted as a link between the eastern and western Welsh elements that appear in the Lives.

The theories of Harris and Hughes have been accepted by scholars ever since. Harris and Hughes are cited by many scholars for the explanation of the origin of *Vespasian*.¹²⁵ The closest to disagreement with their theory has been in passive statements of Richard Sharpe that refer to the author as a 'Brecon copyist'.¹²⁶ However, there is little reason to fully accept this theory. The arguments of Harris and Hughes are as indecisive as those of Flowers. Firstly, the role of Monmouth Priory in the composition is unfounded. While the calendar does refer to St Dochlinus it does not refer to St Florentius. The connection to Monmouth is made purely on the basis that Harris proposes *Vespasian* must have a connection with Saint-Florent-de-Saumur. However, if the place that composed the manuscript was a daughter church of Saint-Florent, as Monmouth Priory was, then it would be expected that the calendar would include their patron saint, rather than an obscure saint connected to the abbey. The fact that St Florentius does not feature in any part of *Vespasian* suggests that it is unlikely to have come from one of his foundations. Hughes notes this as well as the fact that the saints with well-known cult connections with Monmouth in the period, St Gúenole, St Tudy and St Custennin, were also omitted. She dismisses both these omissions with no explanation.¹²⁷

¹²² Ibid., p. 58.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 60.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 59.

¹²⁵ C. Brooke, 'St. Peter of Gloucester and St Cadoc of Llancarfan', in N. Chadwick et al (eds.), *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 259; Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 380; D.M. Dumville, *Saint David of Wales* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 4; D.S. Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David* (Cardiff, 1988), p. xl; J.W. James, *Rhygyfarch's Life of St. David* (Cardiff, 1967), p. xxiv; J. Knight, 'St Tatheus of Caerwent', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* 3.1 (1970-1), p. 29.

¹²⁶ Sharpe, 'Which text is Rhygyfarch's *Life of St. David*?', p. 99.

¹²⁷ Hughes, 'British Library MS. Cotton *Vespasian A. XIV*', pp. 55, 64.

This evidence suggests that it is highly unlikely that *Vespasian* was composed at Monmouth priory.

Secondly, Hughes' promotion of the role of St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester has a tenuous basis at best. It is not conclusive that ownership of Llancarfan and Llanbadarn Fawr would mean that Gloucester would therefore receive copies of the Lives of the principal and, in the case of Llanbadarn Fawr, the neighbouring saints. Hughes also fails to explain why other saints that had connections with Gloucester were not included, or why some saints who were not connected to Gloucester were included. Gloucester may have had an interest in Welsh hagiography, and may indeed have played a role in collecting different Welsh Lives, but there is little evidence to suggest that Gloucester did collect the Lives in *Vespasian*. It should also be added that the links of *Vespasian* to Brecon, from the content of the manuscript to the fact that it was found there, have not been explained by Harris and Hughes.

Unfortunately, other than the scholarship by Harris and Hughes, little has been done that addresses the manuscript as a whole. Most scholarship focuses on particular saints whose Lives are found in *Vespasian*. The *Life of St Cadog* was one of the first Lives to receive attention. This Life was composed by Lifris, who was archdeacon of Glamorgan and magister of Llancarfan. His father was Herewald, bishop of Llandaf. There has been some debate over when exactly Lifris composed his Life. Wade-Evans first suggested that the work was dated to c.1100. He reasoned that it does not mention anything about bishops of Llandaf, so had to be composed before Urban became bishop of Llandaf, but it does show a familiarity with Rhygyfarch's *Life of David* so it had to have been after that that it was composed.¹²⁸

This analysis was completely reassessed by Emanuel. He proposed that Lifris composed his Life in around 1090, before Rhygyfarch wrote his *Life of St David*. He suggested that the sections that were found in both Lifris and Rhygyfarch were added at a later date in response to Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*. He also suggested that Rhygyfarch may have composed his *Life of St David* as a direct response to Lifris, in order to promote St David above St Cadog.¹²⁹ However, this suggestion for the date of composition has not been accepted subsequently. Brooke published an article several years later which ignored Emanuel's dating. Brooke gave a broad date range for the possible period of composition, from 1081-1104. This was based on the theory that Lifris was writing sometime after Rhygyfarch, but

¹²⁸ Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p. xi.

¹²⁹ H.D. Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', *National Library of Wales Journal* 7.3 (1952), pp. 220-22.

also before the Norman conquest of Glamorgan and the granting of Llancarfan to Gloucester.¹³⁰ Jeremy Knight agreed with Brooke's reasoning, but corrected the dating to some point in the early 1090s and before 1095 when Gloucester acquired Llancarfan.¹³¹

Despite Emanuel's dating of Lifris' work, his analysis of the *Life of St Cadog* is still widely accepted. He suggested that the Life as it appeared in Vespasian was actually a composite work rather than the original text by Lifris. However, through his analysis he was able to assess which parts actually constituted the original Life. He showed that there were three main hands that worked on the *Life of St Cadog* in the Vespasian manuscript. His Hand 1 was the main scribe of the text and wrote around 1200. This hand was found to write the main portion of the text but had left five blank folios after f.37v. Hand 2 was contemporary with Hand 1, displaying a similar style of handwriting. Hand 2 wrote the section of the text that was inserted into the gap left by Hand 1. The formal style of this material suggests that it was taken from charter material of Llancarfan. Hand 3 composed marginal additions sometime in the early thirteenth century. Emanuel suggested the different hands represented the changes made to Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* during and after the composition of Vespasian. He proposed that the gap left by Hand 1 was intentional so as to include the text added by Hand 2, but that the text, while anticipated, was not available when Hand 1 was writing. The material added by Hand 3 he suggested came from material unknown to Hands 1 and 2, as no extra space was left for it. Much of this material was copied verbatim from the later *Life of St Cadog* by Caradog of Llancarfan. The later date of Caradog's Life would explain why the material was only added afterwards.¹³²

Emanuel also suggested that changes had been made to the text written by Hand 1 before it was copied into Vespasian. He questioned the authenticity of the preface and prologue of the text. It was unusual for a saint's Life from the period to contain both a preface and a prologue. Also going against the usual hagiographical style was the fact that neither section contained St Cadog's actual name. Emanuel suggested that the stories from these first two sections may have originally been in Lifris' work, but that they had been added to during the twelfth century. He also questioned the four chapters of posthumous miracles found towards the end of the Life. This section displayed a clear change in the vocabulary used and interrupted the flow of the text. Significantly none of the posthumous miracle sections were

¹³⁰ Brooke, 'St. Peter of Gloucester and St Cadoc of Llancarfan', pp. 285-87.

¹³¹ J. Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', in H.N. Savory (ed.), *Glamorgan County History* Vol. II (Cardiff, 1984), p. 386.

¹³² Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', pp. 217-19, 223-26.

found in either of the two Lives by Caradog of Llancarfan or John of Teignmouth from slightly later in the period. Emanuel also suggested that the genealogy of Cadog that immediately followed the posthumous miracles was also an addition made before *Vespasian* was written. The genealogy appears after the authorship colophon so is unlikely to have been part of the original text. The last section that Emanuel proposed had been added to Lifris' work during the thirteenth century involved three episodes that related to St David. These three sections relate to episodes also found in Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*. Emanuel suggested that these three episodes were added to the text in response to the attempt to use Rhygyfarch's Life to make St David the primary saint of Wales.¹³³ As already mentioned, Emanuel's proposal that Rhygyfarch wrote after Lifris is not accepted by scholars, so this last addition he proposed can be dismissed. His analysis of the Hands in the manuscript and the addition of the posthumous miracles have generally been accepted.¹³⁴

The other Life in *Vespasian* to have received much attention is the *Life of St David*. This Life was composed by Rhygyfarch ap Sulien. Rhygyfarch was the eldest son of Bishop Sulien of St Davids. Sulien had his seat at Llanbadarn Fawr, but was brought in to be bishop of St Davids from 1073-78 and again 1080-85.¹³⁵ Rhygyfarch died quite young in 1099, at the age of 42. Much like the date when Lifris wrote his *Life of St Cadog*, the date when Rhygyfarch composed his *Life of St David* is greatly debated. Wade-Evans originally suggested that the Life was composed c.1090.¹³⁶ This date was accepted by Harris but rejected soon after by Nora Chadwick. She proposed that Rhygyfarch must have composed his Life in 1081. She viewed this as the ideal date for the Life to have been written. 1081 marked the year in which William the Conqueror, Rhys ap Tewdwr and Gruffydd ap Cynan all visited St Davids. Chadwick suggested that the *Life of St David* was written for this occasion 'in support of Sulien's policy, and in celebration of the visit of the Conqueror to St Davids.'¹³⁷

Another interpretation was suggested by James in his analysis of the Life. He proposed that Rhygyfarch wrote in 1095 as a response to Canterbury's interference with St Davids. In 1095 the Archbishop of Canterbury had dismissed Wilfred the bishop of St Davids and was actively trying to assert his power over the bishops of St Davids and Llandaf. James

¹³³ Ibid., pp. 219-22.

¹³⁴ Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 388.

¹³⁵ Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David*, pp. xx-xxi.

¹³⁶ Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p. xii.

¹³⁷ N. Chadwick, 'Intellectual Life in West Wales in the Last Days of the Celtic Church', in N. Chadwick et al (eds.), *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 174, 176.

suggested it was in this context that the *Life of St David* was written as a way to establish the rights of St Davids.¹³⁸ Evans proposed yet another theory for the date of composition. He partly agreed with Chadwick, suggesting that the Life was written between 1081 and 1085. His proposal suggested that rather than the Life being composed for the visit of William the Conqueror, it was composed as a result of the visit: during the period following the visit in 1081 but before Sulien left the bishopric in 1085.¹³⁹

More recently J.R. Davies has questioned both Chadwick's and James' dating, suggesting that neither is very likely. He has proposed instead that the *Life of St David* was most likely composed between 1091 and 1093. Rhygyfarch's father died in 1091, and Davies suggested that the lament for St David that is included in the Life was a reflection of Rhygyfarch's own mourning. This would mean that the Life was composed after Sulien's death. Davies suggested that the Life must have been written before 1093 because it contains no obvious anti-Norman sentiment, so must have been composed before the Norman defeat of Rhys ap Tewdwr and the Norman invasion of western Wales.¹⁴⁰

The main topic of debate concerning Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* revolves around which version of the Life represents the original text. The original manuscript is lost and the text is only found in later manuscripts. There are 25 manuscripts and 4 significant printed texts of Rhygyfarch's Life. In his analysis of the different texts James proposed that there were five recensions. The first recension is the Nero recension, whose principal text is *British Library, MS. Nero E.i*, a manuscript from the twelfth century. The next set of texts belongs to the Digby recension. The main manuscript for this collection is *Bodleian Library MS. Digby 112*, also from the twelfth century. The Giraldus recension comes from the abbreviated *Life of St David* by Gerald of Wales, Archdeacon of Brecon and Canon and Prebendary of St Davids c.1176-1203. The fourth recension is based on the Vespasian manuscript that forms the basis of this review. The last recension is the Irish recension, a group of texts from Ireland.¹⁴¹ More recently Sharpe has suggested that the Nero and Digby recensions constitute a single group.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ James, *Rhygyfarch's Life of St. David*, pp. xi-xii.

¹³⁹ Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David*, p. xxxi.

¹⁴⁰ J.R. Davies, 'Some observations on the "Nero", "Digby", and "Vespasian" recensions of *Vita S David*', in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 159-60; Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', pp. 388-90.

¹⁴¹ James, *Rhygyfarch's Life of St. David*, pp. xii-xix.

¹⁴² Sharpe, 'Which text is Rhygyfarch's *Life of St. David*?', p. 93.

The main problem with distinguishing which text represents Rhygyfarch's actual work is that even though Rhygyfarch identifies himself as the author at the end of the Life, this marker appears in two different versions of the text. Opinion over which version of the text most closely represents Rhygyfarch's work has switched several times over the course of the last century. Wade-Evans used the Vespasian text for his translation of the Life in 1923 which he then reprinted in 1944.¹⁴³ This version of the text was accepted by both Chadwick and Harris. Harris suggested that the other versions of the text, both earlier and later, were shortened version of the text found in Vespasian.¹⁴⁴

This view of Vespasian being the primary text was completely re-evaluated by James. He proposed that the Vespasian text was merely a secondary text and that Nero E.i represented the closest version to the basic twelfth century text. He argued that Vespasian could not be the primary text for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Nero and Digby text were both from the twelfth century and he dated the Giraldus text to 1172-6: all predate Vespasian.¹⁴⁵ Secondly, James suggested that the Vespasian text was actually based on the version found in Rouen U. 141. The two texts are very similar, so he suggested the two must have been copies of each other. Rouen U. 141 dates from the twelfth century, so as the earlier text Vespasian must have been copied from the Rouen text.¹⁴⁶

Further, James questioned the authenticity of the text found in Vespasian. The Vespasian text contains 1600 words that are not found in any other version of the text. He suggested that this meant that the text had probably been added to before it was copied into Vespasian. He proposed that the Vespasian text showed two separate stages of editing. He attempted to analyse the text in a similar way to Emanuel in order to identify changes that had been made in the text. He proposed that the first set of changes were made to the text at St Davids around 1190. These changes involved the addition of people and place names in Pembrokeshire that are not found in the Giraldus recension. He saw these additions being made in the period when the cathedral at St Davids was being rebuilt in order to emphasise the local pilgrim features in the area. The second set of changes he proposed took place when Vespasian was being written. These include episodes which relate to other texts found in Vespasian, like the

¹⁴³ Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae*, p. viii.

¹⁴⁴ Chadwick, 'Intellectual Life in West Wales', pp. 174-76; S. Harris, *Saint David in the Liturgy* (Cardiff, 1940), p. 13.

¹⁴⁵ James, *Rhygyfarch's Life of St. David*, pp. xxx-iv.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiii-iv.

bell made by St Gildas in the *Life of St Cadog*. Only someone who was familiar with these texts would have been able to add these sections to the *Life of St David*.¹⁴⁷

The earliest version of the text is found in Nero E.i. Several manuscripts support the text found in Nero. James concluded that this must mean that the Nero text represents the best version of the twelfth century text. He did not propose that Nero represents the original text as written by Rhygyfarch, but an archetype text from St Davids in the twelfth century. He suggested that Bishop Bernard of St Davids owned two copies of the Life, one of which may have been the original text by Rhygyfarch. These two texts were used to create the archetype Nero text from which all the other recensions derived.¹⁴⁸ This analysis then became the accepted interpretation of Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* throughout the rest of the twentieth century. Evan's provided a summary of James' analysis in his work, following his conclusions that the Nero text was closest to the mid-twelfth century text.¹⁴⁹

A major reinterpretation of the text has been completed more recently by R. Sharpe and J.R. Davies. They rejected James' hypothesis and returned to the previous view of Vespasian being the primary text. Sharpe argued that James' rejection of Vespasian was based on a series of flawed assumptions. The fact that there are six manuscripts which are earlier in date does not mean that the Vespasian text must be later: as Sharpe states 'it is common for a text to survive only in manuscripts much later than the author's time.'¹⁵⁰ Another assumption that James makes is that the shorter text is superior, an approach that is used in biblical scholarship. However, it is not necessarily true of medieval texts. Sharpe also questions James' basis for his proposed two stages of changes made to the Vespasian text. The appearance of places relating to Pembrokeshire that are only found in the Vespasian text does not mean that these names were added at a later date. The removal of names was a standard part of hagiographic abbreviation in the Middle Ages, so it would make more sense for the Giraldus text to be an abbreviation of Vespasian.¹⁵¹

J.R. Davies continues Sharpe's line of argument by demonstrating the primacy of the Vespasian text. He shows that the style of Latin used in Vespasian is comparable to that found in eleventh-century England rather than the thirteenth century when the manuscript was written. The use of *-que* at the beginning of sentences was also common in earlier

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. xxxiv-vi.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. vii, xxix-xxx.

¹⁴⁹ Evans, *The Welsh Life of St. David*, pp. xxxix-xli.

¹⁵⁰ Sharpe, 'Which text is Rhygyfarch's *Life of St. David*?', p. 93.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 93-98.

hagiography, like the *Life of Cadog* and the *Life of Máedhóg*. The text also uses Graecisms that are not found in the Nero or Digby recensions. Davies suggested that this style would have been quite pretentious, so the Nero and Digby recensions reflect a simplified version of the text that could be used for wider circulation.¹⁵² Davies rejected James' attempt of an Emanuel type analysis of the Vespasian text. The similarities that James highlighted between the *Life of St David* and the *Life of St Cadog* from Vespasian reflect the fact that Lifris used parts of Rhygyfarch's Life in his writing, not that the Vespasian scribe related them to each other.¹⁵³ Both Sharpe and Davies concisely refuted James' arguments and demonstrated how Vespasian is the primary text of Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*.

Some other saints from Vespasian have been discussed in modern scholarship. Knight analysed the similarities between the Lives of St Tatheus and St Gwynllyw. Both Lives follow a similar model and contain similar episodes. Knight proposed that the two Lives were composed by the same person, with St Gwynllyw being written first then St Tatheus shortly after.¹⁵⁴ In another paper Knight also noted the strong Anglo-Saxon sympathies found in the final chapter of the *Life of St Illtud*. He suggested the Life was composed by an Anglo-Saxon cleric writing for Tewksbury Abbey.¹⁵⁵ The only other significant analysis of any of the Lives from Vespasian is Sharpe's study of the *Life of St Máedhóg*. Although different Lives of St Máedhóg are found in three major collections of Irish saints' Lives, the Vespasian copy is the earliest version of the Life. It has even been argued that the Dublin version of the Life was based on the Vespasian text, in some places presenting an exact copy.¹⁵⁶

As can be seen the scholarship concerning Vespasian has been fairly limited. There has been no substantial analysis of the manuscript as a whole since that of Hughes over 35 years ago. The studies of the Lives in the manuscript have mainly been confined to those relating to St Cadog or St David. The scholarship concerning David has mostly focused on which text represents Rhygyfarch's actual work, with little other analysis of the actual text. Scholarship relating to the other Lives has been scarce and fairly limited. J.R. Davies has made some attempt to show the links between certain saints and local dynasties in Wales, but this has

¹⁵² Davies, 'Some observations on the "Nero", "Digby", and "Vespasian" recensions', pp. 156-58.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 157.

¹⁵⁴ Knight, 'St Tatheus of Caerwent', pp. 29-36.

¹⁵⁵ Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 391.

¹⁵⁶ R. Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints Lives* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 223-4.

again focused on the more major saints like, David, Cadog, Illtud and Padarn.¹⁵⁷ This connection can be seen throughout the Lives found in *Vespasian* and Lives from other texts.

Conclusion

The *Life of St Samson of Dol*, the *Historia Brittonum*, the *Book of Llandaf* and the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium* are all complicated sources with clear limitations. Much of what they contain cannot be reliably used as representations of historical fact and the majority of the material comes from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The *Book of Llandaf* is also limited as it only provides information about the south-east of Wales. However, the source material does suggest some important implications for studies of early Welsh Christianity and the Welsh saints' cults. The *Life of St Samson* provides an early example of a saint's Life and refers to many details of monastic life in Wales in the earlier part of the period. Even though it was written a century after Samson lived, and in Brittany rather than Wales, it is still the earliest source for saints in medieval Wales. It provides important insights into the significance of the cults of St Illtud and St Dyfrig who feature in the Life. It also highlights the fact that monastic foundations were seen as hereditary possessions in this period: Illtud's nephew saw Llanilltud Fawr as his rightful inheritance. The *Historia Brittonum* shows that St Germanus was the main saint of Powys in the ninth century. It also highlights the links between a saint and the ruling dynasty connected to him. These two sources are also important because they provide a comparison to the later Lives, showing how hagiography and saints' cults changed over the period.

The *Book of Llandaf* raises questions about the privileges assigned to St Teilo and the role they played in the cult of St Teilo. The *Book of Llandaf* is also important for showing the way that re-culting in the 12th century occurred. Significantly, it suggests much about the original cult of St Teilo, showing the possible extent of the cult, and the period of its decline. The charters provide an indication of where particular rulers held power and their relations with certain foundations, which has important implications for the study of saints' cults. *Vespasian* is a unique collection of saint's Lives and texts connected to the Welsh saints. Each of the Lives provides an insight into the cults of each of the saints included: concerning both the traditions associated with the cult and the distribution of dedications of the saint. Such a

¹⁵⁷ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', pp. 385-86.

significant text requires greater investigation to show more details of the saints included. Much of the scholarship concerning these sources has been limited with relation to saints' cults, but this analysis has shown that each source can offer some suggestions towards the history of the development of saints and their cults in early medieval Wales.

St Cadog and his Cult

St Cadog was an early Welsh saint, probably belonging to the sixth century. He is thought to have come from south-east Wales and it is in this area that his cult was based. His principal monastery was at Llancarfan, though there are dedications to the saint across the south of Wales. There are quite a lot of sources that refer to St Cadog from the medieval period. There are two Lives of the saint, one by Lifris of Llancarfan and one by Caradog of Llancarfan. The first *Life of St Cadog* was written by Lifris between 1090 and when Llancarfan was acquired by St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, c. 1095-1104. The *Life of St Cadog* appears in the collection of Welsh saints' Lives found in *MS. Vespasian A. XIV*. Lifris was the Master of Llancarfan, archdeacon of Glamorgan and was also the son of Bishop Herewald.¹ This first *Life of St Cadog* is important as it is one of the earliest pieces of hagiography produced in Wales, only predated by the *Life of St Germanus* which appears in the ninth century in the *Historia Brittonum*, and Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* which was composed between 1091 and 1093.² The second *Life of St Cadog* was composed by Caradog of Llancarfan at some point in the second quarter of the twelfth century. Lifris' version of the Life was composed before the Norman conquest of Glamorgan, while Caradog's was composed after which provides an interesting opportunity to examine any changes which occurred as a result of the Norman Conquest. This is discussed in greater detail below. The *Life of St Cadog* by Lifris is the version that will be used for most of this chapter as it represents the cult of St Cadog before the Norman conquest of Glamorgan.

St Cadog also appears in several other hagiographical texts. He features in the *Lives of St Finnian*, *St Illtud* and *St Gwynllyw*. The *Life of St Finnian* is an Irish Life composed in the ninth or tenth century and contains the earliest mention of St Cadog.³ This piece of hagiography is important as it reveals some details of the cult of St Cadog in the ninth or tenth century. Both the *Life of St Illtud* and the *Life of St Gwynllyw* appear in the same manuscript as the *Life of St Cadog*, *MS. Vespasian A. XIV*. These are products of the twelfth

¹ C.N.L. Brooke, 'St. Peter of Gloucester and St Cadoc of Llancarfan', in N. Chadwick et al (eds.), *Celt and Saxon: Studies in the Early British Border* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 287; J. Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', in H.N. Savory (ed.), *Glamorgan County History II* (Cardiff, 1984), p. 386.

² For further discussion of the dates of the *Historia Brittonum* and Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* see Introduction.

³ K. Hughes, 'The Historical Value of the Live of St. Finnian of Clonard', *The English Historical Review* 69 (1954), pp. 363, 372.

century, so reflect the situation of the cult of St Cadog at the end of the period discussed. Through the hagiography and the physical remains of the cult of St Cadog the way that the cult changed and developed over this period can be traced.

Relationships of the Cult of St Cadog

The success of a saint's cult in early medieval Wales was highly dependent on its relationships with others who held power. The cult of St Cadog succeeded in creating many important relationships with both royal and ecclesiastical powers. This was achieved through the promotion of familial relationships attributed to St Cadog himself and through the connections made between Llancarfan and other significant saints' cults and ruling dynasties.

Relationships with different ruling dynasties were a prominent feature of both early and late medieval Welsh saints' cults. Many of these connections were probably created by the eleventh- and twelfth-century hagiographers of the Welsh saints and the compilers of the Welsh saints' genealogies.⁴ However, some of them would also have been based on traditions connected to a particular saint. These traditions most probably did not represent the actual relations of the saint as they claimed, but may represent the relationships cultivated by the saints' principal monasteries during the early medieval period. St Cadog and his cult were connected to several important ruling dynasties. St Cadog was mainly connected to the kingdoms of Glywysing and Gwynllwg. This relationship is seen in both the *Life of St Cadog* and the genealogies appended to it. In the *Life of St Cadog* the preface immediately introduces St Cadog's grandfather, Glywys, the eponymous ruler of Glywysing, and St Cadog's father, Gwynllyw, the eponymous ruler of Gwynllwg.⁵ St Cadog is introduced as the eldest son of Gwynllyw, who was in turn the eldest son of Glywys.⁶ This is repeated in the genealogies which were appended to the *Life of St Cadog* and in St Cadog's genealogy in *Bonedd y Saint*.⁷ This linked St Cadog to a dynasty that went all the way back to the origins of the kingdom, adding prestige and validity to the later cult: St Cadog's descent could be traced back to as regal an origin as the great saints like St David, and even many Welsh rulers.

⁴ J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 385.

⁵ Lifris, Preface.

⁶ Lifris, §1.

⁷ *Bonedd y Saint*, §32; Lifris, §45.

Date	Glywysing	Gwent
Early 7 th C	Meurig ap Tewdrig	
	Arthwys ap Meurig	
Mid-7 th C	Ithel ap Arthwys	
	Morgan ap Arthwys	
Late 7 th C	Ithel ap Morgan	
Early 8 th C	Meurig and Rhys ap Ithel	
	Rhodri ap Ithel	
	Ffernfael ap Ithel	
Mid-8 th C	Gurgauarn ap Ffernfael	
	Athrwys ap Ffernfael	
Late 8 th C	Ithel ap Arthrwys	
	Ffernfael ap Ithel	
Break c. 775-c. 848		
Mid-late 9 th C	Hywel ap Rhys (line of Rhys ap Ithel)	Meurig ap Arthfael (ap Rhys ap Ithel)
Late 9 th - early 10 th C	Arthfael ap Hywel	Brochfael ap Meurig
Early 10 th C	Gruffydd ap Owain ap Hywel	Cadel ap Arthfael ap Hywel
c. 930-949	Cadwgon ab Owain ap Hywel	
c. 949-974	Morgan ab Owain ap Hywel	
c. 974-1005	Idwallon and Owain ap Morgan	
c. 1005-1043	Hywel and Rhys ap Owain	
c. 1039-1055	Meurig ap Hywel	
c. 1055-1072	Cadwgon ap Meurig	

Table 2 The early medieval rulers of Morgannwg in the line of Meurig.⁸

The link made between St Cadog and Glywysing was important for the cult of St Cadog. The kingdom of Glywysing was the early name given to an area of south-east Wales that later became known as Morgannwg, after the reign of Morgan ab Owain in the second half of the tenth century, and was later known as Glamorgan.⁹ In the *Life of St Cadog* the saint transfers

⁸ P.C. Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD300-1400* Vol I (Cardiff, 1974), pp. 16, 17, 43; Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, pp. 18-19, 67-72; Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', pp. 366-67.

⁹ W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1982), pp. 102-3.

his powers as prince of Glywysing to his aunt's husband, Meurig.¹⁰ Meurig in this context is thought to equate with Meurig ap Tewdrig, the early seventh-century ruler of Glywysing.¹¹ The dynasty of Meurig was the dominant line in Morgannwg from the seventh century to the late eleventh century. There was a brief break in the dynasty in the late eighth century and early ninth century, but otherwise the dynasty continued up to the late eleventh century (see Table.1). Appended to the *Life of St Cadog* are a series of grants known as the Llancarfan Charters. The earliest of these charters, charters 65 and 68, are witnessed by Meurig.¹² These charters represent a genuine connection between Llancarfan and Meurig. By including Meurig in the hagiography Lifris was clearly trying to suggest a link between the cult of St Cadog and the ruling family of Glamorgan from the time of Meurig through to the late eleventh century, when he composed the *Life of St Cadog*. The Llancarfan Charters do suggest that there was an early connection between Llancarfan and this dynasty which may well have continued through the period. The success of the cult of St Cadog may have been largely due to the longevity of the dynasty of Meurig: it ensured that Llancarfan was constantly connected to people who had power and wealth. Had another powerful dynasty taken power in that area then Llancarfan and St Cadog's other monasteries may not have received the grants and patronage that allowed them to continue to prosper.

St Cadog was also connected to the dynasty of Brycheiniog. This was advantageous as Brycheiniog was the kingdom directly to the north of Glywysing. Significantly, he was connected to the kingdom through his family: his mother was Gwladus, one of the daughters of Brychan the eponymous ruler of Brycheiniog. Gwladus and her links with Brycheiniog appear in the prologue to the *Life of St Cadog*, highlighting the connection right from the outset in a similar manner to how the connection to Glywysing is made.¹³ This connection is further developed in other sections of the hagiography. In a later episode St Cadog is granted land to build a monastery, Llanspyddid, by Brychan for performing a miracle. Brychan is notably referred to as 'auī beati Cadoci' (*grandfather of the blessed Cadog*) here - a clear emphasis of his relationship with St Cadog.¹⁴ The hagiography promotes the political relationship that St Cadog had with the neighbouring kingdom of Brycheiniog to ensure the

¹⁰ Lifris, §25.

¹¹ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966), pp. 138-39; W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978), p. 100.

¹² Lifris, §65, 68; T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 272-3.

¹³ Lifris, Prologue.

¹⁴ Lifris, §11.

continued patronage of St Cadog foundations in Brycheiniog, like Llanspyddid, and give greater legitimacy to the saint.

Through St Cadog's relationship with Brychan the cult of St Cadog was also able to establish a link with Ireland, as Brycheiniog had strong Irish associations in the medieval period.¹⁵ Ireland played an important role in the Church in Wales during the period, seen in the many mentions of Ireland that appear in the Welsh hagiography. In the genealogies appended to the *Life of St Cadog* the section belonging to Brychan's genealogy details his descent from a powerful ruling family in Ireland: the branch of St Cadog's genealogy is described as being traced back 'from the best stocks of the kings of the Irish.'¹⁶ This would have added to the regal and holy standing of St Cadog, and so raised the standing of his cult, by placing him alongside the great Irish saints. A link to Ireland was clearly considered to be important. Many saints, like St David are described as having journeyed to Ireland to be educated or had close connections with other Irish saints. This may have been because Ireland was seen to have been the origin of many great holy men and women in the period and so a connection with Ireland and the great Irish foundations afforded a saint with greater status in Wales.

The cult of St Cadog was not just aligned with the powerful Irish Church but also with the Roman past. St Cadog's main line of ancestry in the genealogies appended to the hagiography was traced back to Maximian. This represents Magnus Maximus, or Maxen Wledig as he is known in Welsh, who was made emperor by the Roman army in Britain.¹⁷ The genealogy even includes details of the deeds of Maximus: his taking of troops from Britain, his defeat of Emperor Gratian and his subsequent rule as emperor.¹⁸ The description of Maximus is clearly meant to emphasize the idea that St Cadog was descended from a figure who was not only emperor but also had Welsh connections. This would have added to the power of the cult of St Cadog who would have gained status through the association. Maximus is found in several Welsh genealogies. In *Bonedd y Saint* he is claimed as the ancestor of three other saints, St Lleudat, St Pablic and St Kyngar.¹⁹ Maximus is also claimed as the ancestor of several ruling dynasties. The earliest recorded claim to a relation to

¹⁵ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1954), p. 25.

¹⁶ Lifris, §46.

¹⁷ B. Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus: on the appropriation of Roman history in medieval Wales, c.800–1250', *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018), pp. 381–405; B.F. Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic* (Dublin, 2005), p. xliii.

¹⁸ Lifris, §45.

¹⁹ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966) pp. 57, 63, 65.

Maximus is made by the kings of Powys in the ninth century as seen on the Pillar of Eliseg.²⁰ Maximus also appears in the genealogies of the rulers of the Isle of Man, the ‘Men of the North’, Rhodri Mawr, Gruffydd ap Cynan, and Gwenhelyth Dyfed.²¹ It can be shown that many major rulers of Powys, Gwynedd and Dyfed claimed descent from Maximus. His appearance in so many genealogies, especially those of important rulers, shows that the Welsh dynasties used Maximus to legitimise their claims to power and to suggest a sense of continuity with the Roman past.²² In the same way the compiler of the genealogy of St Cadog was clearly trying to give the cult of St Cadog greater legitimacy and power by aligning him with the Roman past.

The same line of ancestry in the genealogies appended to Lifris’ *Life of St Cadog* places a marked emphasis on tracing St Cadog’s lineage back not just to a Roman emperor, but all the way back to Augustus Caesar, through a line of other Roman emperors.²³ Many Welsh genealogies trace Roman descent through Maxen Wledig, as described above, but there is only one other example of a medieval Welsh genealogy that traces back to Augustus. In Harleian MS. 3859 the genealogy of Rhun ap Neithon, a genealogy not connected to any of the Welsh kingdoms, traces back to Augustus Caesar as well.²⁴ The inclusion of Augustus in St Cadog’s genealogy suggests that the compiler wanted to show that the saint was not just connected to the Roman past, but that he was from the noblest of Roman stock. As with the connection to St Mary discussed below, the genealogy seems to be attempting to express St Cadog’s ancestry in the most extreme political and religious terms possible. It is clear that whoever compiled the genealogy was trying to show that St Cadog was the most noble and most holy of the saints.

Lifris’ *Life of St Cadog* shows that the cult of St Cadog also gained power through guarantees and privileges. In the hagiography several rulers grant privileges and guarantees of safety to the saint, and by extension his foundations. St Cadog received guarantees from Arthur, Maelgwn Gwynedd, Rhun, son of Maelgwn, Rhain and Meurig.²⁵ This represents guarantees from the most well-known ruler of Britain along with the ruling dynasties of Gwynedd, Brycheiniog and Glamorgan itself. The confirmation of the status of refuge meant that the

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 1-3.

²¹ Ibid., pp., 10, 46, 73, 99, 106.

²² Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic*, pp. xlvi-xlviii.

²³ Lifris, §45.

²⁴ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies*, p. 11; Guy, ‘Constantine, Helena, Maximus’, pp. 390-1.

²⁵ Lifris, §§22, 23, 24, 25.

lands and properties attributed to St Cadog would be exempt from tribute and could not be attacked: they effectively guaranteed the independence of the cult of St Cadog.²⁶ This was very important as the practice of raiding was common in medieval Wales: the *Life of St Cadog* alone contains five episodes with raids.²⁷ The granting of privileges and guarantees was a key feature of medieval hagiography and Lifris places a special emphasis on this within the *Life of St Cadog*. There is a marked interest in this piece of hagiography in highlighting the privileges and rights of St Cadog and therefore the abbot of Llancarfan.²⁸ While these guarantees might be seen in the context of the Norman Conquest, it is more likely that the emphasis placed on St Cadog's right of refuge was a response to incursions and instabilities within Wales itself.²⁹ Guarantees from Gwynedd are claimed in two separate episodes, probably a response by Llancarfan to the rule of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn who claimed rule over both Gwynedd and Deheubarth and was responsible for considerable expansion of Deheubarth in the eleventh century.³⁰ The cult of St Teilo was forced to relocate to Llandaf as a result of this expansion.³¹ The threat of political expansion and conflict would have been an important consideration for Llancarfan and other foundations associated with other saints' cults in Wales during this period, and so the promotion of the rights and privileges of the cult of St Cadog would have been a key focus for Lifris when composing the *Life of St Cadog*. Lifris was clearly trying to give legitimacy to these claims to rights and privileges that Llancarfan made by dating them back to the eponymous rulers of Gwynedd, Brycheiniog and the oldest ancestor of the line of Meurig in Glamorgan.

Lifris' approach to these episodes is entirely systematic. The episodes that concern the guarantees have been grouped together, and follow in order from greatest significance to least. Each encounter follows a similar pattern: the ruler comes into conflict with St Cadog and acts as a foil for the saint to demonstrate his powers. The ruler is defeated and grants privileges to St Cadog and his foundations to make amends.³² Arthur is the first ruler introduced who confirms the rights of refuge of St Cadog and his lands.³³ Arthur, as the greatest legendary ruler of Britain, would have been considered above any ruler of Wales and

²⁶ H. Pryce, *Native Law and the Church in Medieval Wales* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 169-71.

²⁷ Lifris, §§16, 19, 23, 24, 25.

²⁸ W. Davies, 'Property rights and property claims in Welsh "Vitae" of the eleventh century', *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IV^e-XII^e siècles, Études Augustiniennes* (Paris, 1981), pp. 520-22.

²⁹ Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 386.

³⁰ Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 106.

³¹ See Chapter 3. The Cult of St Teilo.

³² B.F. Roberts, 'Culhwch ac Olwen, The Triads, Saints Lives' in R. Bromwich, A.O.H. Jarman & B.F. Roberts (eds.) *The Arthur of the Welsh* (Cardiff, 1991), pp. 82-3.

³³ Lifris, §22.

his confirmation introduces the idea that no ruler in Wales could violate the refuge of St Cadog or he would be placing himself above Arthur. Lifris is not unique in choosing to use Arthur in this way. The Lives of St Padarn, St Carantoc and St Efflam also feature episodes with Arthur where he comes into conflict with the saint and grants privileges when he is defeated.³⁴ He also appears in the *Life of St Illtud*, but as the cousin of St Illtud rather than in any episode of conflict.³⁵ In each of these cases Arthur is being used to lend legitimacy to the claims of the foundations of these saints.

The following two episodes concern Maelgwn Gwynedd and his son Rhun.³⁶ These two rulers were the supposed earliest rulers of the kingdom of Gwynedd. Maelgwn was the eponymous ruler of the kingdom and had monastic ties: he spent some time in the sixth century living a monastic life.³⁷ He was a natural choice to represent Gwynedd, with his son, to create a legitimate history to the privileges and rights that Llancarfan claimed and so promote the idea that they must be maintained by the subsequent rulers of Gwynedd. Gwynedd was important to include as until the end of the rule of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn in 1063 Glamorgan was subject to Gwynedd, and Gwent had become the frontier battleground between Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, king of Gwynedd and Gruffydd ap Rhydderch, ruler of Deheubarth.³⁸ After the death of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn Glamorgan was no longer subject to Gwynedd so Lifris' inclusion of Maelgwn and Rhun was his way of ensuring that men of Gwynedd respected the sanctity of the lands of the cult of St Cadog in the future.

Rhain, son of Brychan appears in the next episode.³⁹ In this episode Rhain confirms St Cadog's right of refuge saying 'may every one who shall spring from my race be cursed, unless he have protected the race of Gwynllyw, and if he violate the pact which I have concluded with saint Cadog.'⁴⁰ This ensured the protection of the lands of the cult of St Cadog by the rulers of Brycheiniog, the closest northern neighbour of Gwynllwg, for subsequent generations. The traditional relationship between the two kingdoms through family relations is used as the basis to guarantee safety and ensure patronage for the St Cadog foundations in Brycheiniog.

³⁴ Roberts, '*Culhwch ac Olwen*', p. 83.

³⁵ See Chapter 2. The Cult of St Illtud for further discussion of Arthur in the *Life of St Illtud*.

³⁶ Lifris, §§23-24.

³⁷ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 385.

³⁸ D. Crouch, 'The Slow Death of Kingship in Glamorgan, 1067-1158' *Morgannwg* XXIX (1985), p. 22.

³⁹ Lifris, §25.

⁴⁰ Lifris, §25.

The last guarantee is given in the same episode by Meurig when St Cadog gives to him the whole region, except Gwynllwg to rule over.⁴¹ As discussed above this was a guarantee that protected both the foundations of St Cadog in Gwynllwg and the lands of Llancarfan, which were outside of Gwynllwg. This is an example of how rights of refuge could be held by churches outside of the direct area controlled by a ruler.⁴² In this way Lifris manufactures guarantees of refuge and the confirmation of privileges from a powerful ruler of all of Britain, then from the former over-kings of Gwynedd, then Glywysing's neighbour Brycheiniog and finally the kings of the lands of Glywysing itself which was home to the cult of St Cadog: he shows that St Cadog, and by extension Llancarfan, had power over kings and rulers both great and small and so should never be violated.⁴³

As already mentioned above, there are a number of charters appended to the *Life of St Cadog*. The grants described in these charters reveal the relationship that Llancarfan had with a number of rulers. The charters record grants made to Llancarfan in the early medieval period, though exact dates are uncertain. Charters 62, 64, 65, 67 and 68 are the earliest of the group, dating to the seventh century. Charters 55, 56, 59, 61 and 66 are from a slightly later period, probably belonging to the second half of the eighth century. The remaining charters, 57, 58, 60 and 63 are not credible as they claim to have been witnessed by St Cadog himself.⁴⁴

Although those who made the grants recorded in the charters are often unknown, the witnesses are often recognisable rulers. Meurig, ruler of Gwynllwg, was a witness to charters 65 and 68 and his grandson Morgan ab Arthwys was a witness to charters 62, 64 and 67. The presence of these rulers and other lords as witnesses to the charters showed that there was a continued relationship between Llancarfan and those who held political power at least through the seventh and eighth centuries. It also demonstrates the ability of Llancarfan to call on these people to appear as witnesses to the grants, showing that the abbot of Llancarfan in this period had the power to call these important lay people together to assist him. The charters themselves show that Llancarfan continued to receive grants and patronage, which was an important factor in the growth and success of the cult of St Cadog.

The three genealogies appended to Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* reveal much about the relationships that Llancarfan chose to promote in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. The first genealogy is that of the main male line of descent described above, the second that of St

⁴¹ Lifris, §25.

⁴² Pryce, *Native Law and the Church*, pp. 170-71.

⁴³ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 295-96.

⁴⁴ Lifris, §§55-68; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 272-3.

Cadog's mother's father, and then mother, the third is the line of St Cadog's father's mother.⁴⁵ The primary place is given to the connection to Rome and Glywysing. It is clear that promoting the political connections of St Cadog was more important to the cult of St Cadog than promoting his religious connections, presumably because the saintly credentials of St Cadog had long been established but political connections and patronage gave continued advantages to Llancarfan. The *Life of St Cadog* is a clear piece of religious propaganda, designed to show the spiritual greatness of the saint and to publicise his many miracles, but also a piece of political propaganda used by Llancarfan to promote the rights and privileges that it claimed. It shows that while monastic institutions like Llancarfan were of ecclesiastical character, the political relationships it had with the surrounding rulers were central to its existence: as discussed above the relationships with rulers offered protection and grants without which the cult could not operate.

Political connections and patronage gave the cult of St Cadog power and allowed it to expand but the religious affiliations of the cult also increased its status. As with St Cadog's political connections, his family played an important role in the religious connections of the cult. The genealogy appended to the *Life of St Cadog* not only detailed his links with important rulers, but also with great religious figures. Through the lines of both of his grandmothers the genealogy claims that St Cadog was descended from both Mary, the mother of Christ, and Anna, the cousin of Mary.⁴⁶ In the same way that Llancarfan used the genealogies to give legitimacy and power to St Cadog by connecting him to the Roman past, they used the genealogies as a way to suggest that St Cadog had inherited his holy nature. Mary features in a number of other genealogies, both those of saints and secular rulers. The genealogies of St David, St Beuno and St Carannog all claim that the saints were descended from Mary.⁴⁷ As the mother of Christ Mary would have been seen as the mother of Christianity and therefore the most holy ancestor that could be claimed for these saints. The compiler of St Cadog's genealogy has once again decided not only to give the saint a holy past, but the most holy ancestry possible. Notably this inheritance came through the female line. This trend is seen with other saints, as with St David whose mother was St Non. The majority of Welsh saints appear to have been male in the early medieval period, but it also seems that hagiographers chose to emphasise in many saints that their holiness came through the female line.

⁴⁵ Lifris, §§45-47.

⁴⁶ Lifris, §46.

⁴⁷ Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, pp. 26, 30.

The choice in St Cadog's case of St Mary and St Anne could also be seen as significant: these mothers of the Christianity were chosen rather than any great male saints like St Peter or St Paul. It suggests that those in ecclesiastical institutions in Wales were less concerned with Rome than with Jerusalem. Two separate pilgrimages of St Cadog to Jerusalem are described in the *Life of St Cadog*, and one of the relics of St Cadog is reported as having come from there.⁴⁸ In a similar way in other Welsh hagiography of the period the main pilgrimages described are those to Jerusalem rather than to Rome. The shared pilgrimage of St David, St Teilo and St Padarn, for example, is to Jerusalem.⁴⁹ However, the *Life of St Cadog* does also state that St Cadog had been on pilgrimage to Rome on seven occasions, and St Gildas is seen to make the pilgrimage in another episode.⁵⁰ It may be instead that whoever created the genealogy believed that St Cadog would gain greater status through a connection with the holy family and Jerusalem than with any great saint of the Roman Church. The inclusion of Mary in St Cadog's genealogy and his great pilgrimage to Jerusalem could also be seen in the light of the possible rivalry between Llancarfan and St Davids in the period that the *Life of St Cadog* was produced.⁵¹ In the *Life of St David* the saint makes a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and receives great praise there and brings back a holy relic. The genealogy appended to the hagiography traces his ancestry back to St Mary.⁵² The inclusion of all of these elements in the *Life of St Cadog* may simply be Llancarfan's way of showing that St Cadog was the equal of St David.

The family of St Cadog was rich in its saints. St Cadog's father's mother was descended from the line of Ceredig ap Cunedda, and through that line St Cadog was supposedly related to at least eighteen saints including such prominent saints as St Teilo and St Dogfael.⁵³ Cadog's grandfather Brychan had a large family of saints as well. Brychan is purported to have fathered many children through several marriages, though no two sources agree entirely on their number or identity.⁵⁴ Of these two groups only one saint, St Ceinwen, a daughter of Brychan is mentioned in any relation to St Cadog. In the *Life of St Ceinwen* St Cadog visits her and ministers to her at her death.⁵⁵ She does not appear in the *Life of St Cadog*. This

⁴⁸ Lifris, §§14, 15, 32.

⁴⁹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§46-8; *Vita Sancti Paterni*, §20.

⁵⁰ Lifris, §§26, 27.

⁵¹ H.D. Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', *National Library of Wales Journal* 7.3 (1952), pp. 220-22.

⁵² *Vita Sancti David*, §68.

⁵³ Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies AD300-1400*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, p. 26.

⁵⁵ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. II (London, 1908), p. 52.

suggests that Llangeinwen, the principal church of St Ceinwen, was attempting to gain legitimacy and power by connecting itself to the more powerful and extensive cult of St Cadog. There were a further number of saints in St Cadog's more immediate family. The preface of the *Life of St Cadog* mentions St Cadog's uncle Pedrog, who became a holy man in Cornwall.⁵⁶ St Cadog's mother and father, Gwladus and Gwynllyw, also became saints after St Cadog convinced them to renounce their worldly wealth and become hermits.⁵⁷ St Cadog had a large saintly family, with the hagiographical material placing particular emphasis on his relationships with his mother, father, aunt and uncle.

The hagiography also reflects the relationships between St Cadog and a number of other saints. St Tathan, named Meuthi in the *Life of St Cadog*, was a saint from Caerwent who appears as St Cadog's first teacher.⁵⁸ The hagiography also links St Cadog to his three principal disciples: St Finnian, St Macmoil and St Elli. St Finnian and St Macmoil became disciples of St Cadog in Ireland and returned with him to Wales.⁵⁹ The late ninth or early tenth-century Irish *Life of St Finnian* contains the first written account of St Cadog. The Life describes how St Finnian met St Cadog along with St David and St Gildas at Cell Muine and travelled together for some time. There follows a story about the founding of 'Lann Gabran', most likely Llancarfan. The hagiography says that St Finnian stayed for 30 years in Britain learning from the three saints he had met. The only episode that describes this period is about a miracle concerning stags pulling wood to a church.⁶⁰ This episode also appears in the *Life of St Cadog*, where St Finnian has two stags bring wood and by a miracle the book he was reading is saved from the rain.⁶¹ The *Life of St Finnian* does not state where this miracle occurred, but the fact that Lifris chose to include it in the *Life of St Cadog* shows that he was trying to suggest that it took place at Llancarfan. St Cadog's presence in the *Life of St Finnian* and the fact that Llancarfan is the only monastery from Wales named in it suggests that there may have been an established connection between Llancarfan and Clonard.⁶² St Elli takes on the role of surrogate son to St Cadog in the hagiography: St Cadog takes responsibility for St Elli's upbringing from the age of three at the wish of St Elli's mother.⁶³ It is to St Elli that St Cadog entrusts the care of Llancarfan when he is away and who he eventually makes abbot of

⁵⁶ Lifris, Preface.

⁵⁷ *Vita Sancti Gundleii*, §§2-7.

⁵⁸ Lifris, §7.

⁵⁹ Lifris, §11.

⁶⁰ *Vita Sancti Finnian*, 2529-2561; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 121.

⁶¹ Lifris, §12.

⁶² Hughes, 'The Historical Value of the Live of St. Finnian of Clonard', p. 367.

⁶³ Lifris, §14.

Llancarfan when he leaves Wales to go to Beneventum.⁶⁴ None of the saints that St Cadog was associated with were Welsh - instead there is a clear Irish emphasis placed on St Cadog's followers. St Tathan was originally from Ireland and both Finnian and Macmoil came back with St Cadog from Ireland. As mentioned above Cadog himself had Irish family through his grandfather's line. This suggests that the cult of St Cadog may have had close ties with Ireland, and that the connection was one that Llancarfan wanted to promote. It may be that the cult gained a certain amount of prestige through connections with the church in Ireland. Clonard, the principal foundation of St Finnian, for example was one of the great Irish foundations and a relationship with it would have added to the reputation of Llancarfan.

St Illtud is another saint that is connected to St Cadog, but the relationship is more complicated than with that of St Cadog's followers. In the *Life of St Cadog* St Illtud appears as a soldier whose men are swallowed up by the earth at St Cadog's command. St Illtud then begs St Cadog to make him a monk which St Cadog then proceeds to do.⁶⁵ In this way St Illtud is presented as being subordinate to St Cadog. However, this is not how the event is portrayed in the *Life of St Illtud*. In the *Life of St Illtud* St Cadog is seen to perform the same miracle, and St Illtud asks St Cadog's advice on how to make amends. St Cadog advises St Illtud to become a monk and St Illtud decides to do so later. The actual act of being tonsured and accepted as a monk is completed by St Dyfrig in the *Life of St Illtud*, rather than St Cadog.⁶⁶ In the late seventh-century *Life of St Samson*, which contains the earliest mention of St Illtud, he is described as having been ordained by St Germanus.⁶⁷ The *Life of St Samson* also suggests a very different dynamic between the two saints than that described in the *Life of St Cadog*. St Samson is shown to come from south-east Wales where he was educated by St Illtud. St Illtud is described as 'the famous master of the Britons' and 'of all the Britons the most accomplished'.⁶⁸ This suggests that the cult of St Illtud held the most prominent place in south-east Wales in the period. It also suggests that Llanilltud Fawr was the centre of the main monastic school in the area. The author also mentions that he had visited Llanilltud Fawr. The fact that Llancarfan and St Cadog are not mentioned at all despite the hagiographer supposedly having been to south-east Wales suggests that the cult of St Cadog was not significant enough to be worth mentioning. Other saints like St Dyfrig are mentioned in the

⁶⁴ Ibid., §§26, 37.

⁶⁵ Lifris, §19.

⁶⁶ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§3, 7.

⁶⁷ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

⁶⁸ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

course of the *Life of St Samson*. St Cadog's absence once again suggests that while the hagiographer may have known about some major Welsh saints, St Cadog was not considered to be important enough to mention. The hagiography of the seventh century, then, does not show any relationship between St Illtud and St Cadog and clearly places St Illtud in a superior position, but by the late eleventh century Lifris was claiming that St Cadog had a relationship with St Illtud where St Cadog was the dominant saint. This most likely reflects an attempt by Llancarfan to undermine Llanilltud Fawr and the cult of St Illtud.

The Llancarfan Charters show that there was an actual relationship between Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr in the seventh century. Just as the witnesses showed that certain lords and rulers were linked to Llancarfan, so the clerical witnesses can highlight the relationships Llancarfan held with other ecclesiastical institutions. As already mentioned, the earliest charters, 65 and 68, date to the early seventh century. Charter 65 is witnessed by the abbot of Llancarfan, the abbot of Llandough and several clerics from Llanilltud Fawr. Charter 68 has the abbots of Llancarfan, Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr as witnesses as well as clerics from both Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr. Charters 62, 64 and 67 date to later in the seventh century. The abbot and future abbot of Llancarfan along with the prior of Llanilltud Fawr were the witnesses for charter 62. Charter 64 is witnessed by the abbot of Llancarfan and five clerics from Llanilltud Fawr. Charter 67 has the abbot, presbyter and several clerics of Llancarfan as witnesses, along with the 'princeps' of Llandough and a Bishop Berthgwin, possibly of Llanilltud Fawr. Charters 55, 56, 59, 61 and 66 are from a slightly later period, probably the second half of the eighth century. Charter 55 is witnessed by the abbots of Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr. The remaining charters only have witnesses from Llancarfan.⁶⁹ The charters present a picture of the relationships that Llancarfan had with Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr between the early seventh century and the late eighth century. The early seventh-century charters are consistently witnessed by members of all three monasteries. Members of the familia of Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr appear in all of the charters from the late seventh century, but Llandough only appears in one. Only one of the eighth century charters is witnessed by someone from Llanilltud Fawr, the rest solely by Llancarfan. This all suggests that the relationships that Llancarfan held with Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr slowly diminished over these two centuries. In the early seventh century the three foundations clearly had a close relationship, with Llancarfan able to ask members of Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr to be present to witness grants made to them. In these cases it

⁶⁹ Lifris, §§55-6, 59, 61-2, 64-8; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 272-3.

is often the abbot who came to act as witness, suggesting a good relationship between the heads of the three monasteries. By the late eighth century Llanccarfan is either unable to request their presence or does not wish to do so. It suggests that during the course of the seventh and eighth centuries Llanccarfan slowly became more independent of Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr. The disappearance of the two foundations from the charters should not be seen as an indication that they declined in power during this period, rather that each became more independent and less likely to be involved in each other's affairs.

The *Life of St Cadog* also suggests a relationship between St Cadog and St David. In the same way that the portrayal of St Illtud in the hagiography was used to make him appear lesser than St Cadog, St David's appearance only serves to show that he is not as great as St Cadog, which in turn highlights the rivalry between the two saints.⁷⁰ In St David's first appearance he pleads with an angel that he is not worthy of holding a synod as St Cadog was 'more worth by birth than myself, more distinguished for sanctity, wiser in understanding, and more skilful in speech.'⁷¹ The Synod of Brefi features in the *Life of St David*, where he performs a miracle by making a hill rise and preaching from the top of it.⁷² The episode in the *Life of St Cadog* is included seemingly to show that St Cadog was superior to St David and to explain why St David held the synod of Brefi rather than St Cadog. St Cadog's later anger over the synod which has to be appeased by an angel suggests that the relationship between the two saints was less than friendly: Lifris seems to be trying to show that St David held St Cadog in high esteem while St Cadog had a poor view of St David.⁷³ This suggests a rivalry between the two cults in the eleventh century. This rivalry may also explain the fact that St Cadog's genealogy traces his line back to Augustus and St Mary. The genealogy of St David also traces his lineage back to St Mary, but only as far back as Cunedda, king of north Wales.⁷⁴ The compiler of the genealogy of St Cadog therefore matched St David in holy ancestry but chose to give him an even greater political ancestry. As with St Illtud, the rivalry between the cult of St Cadog and the cult of St David is only apparent in the *Life of St Cadog* so can only represent the situation between the two cults in the late eleventh century.

⁷⁰ Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', pp. 220-22.

⁷¹ Lifris, §13.

⁷² *Vita Sancti David*, §§49-53.

⁷³ Lifris, §17.

⁷⁴ *Vita Sancti David*, §68.

The Cult of St Cadog in the Landscape

The physical imprint of a saint's cult on the landscape can reflect the pattern of growth of the cult. The impact of the cult of St Cadog can be clearly seen across south-east Wales, through the dedications to the saint and the archaeological remains of the cult, which are found in the form of early medieval inscribed stones. The pattern and distribution of the cult and how it related to the physical environment helps to show how it developed and grew between the sixth and twelfth centuries.

St Cadog's principal foundation was Llanccarfan. It is located in the Vale of Glamorgan by the river Nant Llanccarfan, at the bottom of a quite steep valley. As St Cadog's principal foundation the site would have been central to the cult of St Cadog. There are some traditions that suggest that Llanccarfan was not originally founded by St Cadog. One suggestion that was popular in the nineteenth century was that St Germanus originally founded the site as a deterrent to Pelagianism in the fifth century. The reason for this connection between Llanccarfan and St Germanus is often explained by a mistaken interpretation of the naming of the site: it is suggested that the Carvan brook preserved the name 'Garvan' or 'Garman' from 'Germanus'.⁷⁵ Another tradition links St Dyfrig to the site. This tradition suggests that either St Dyfrig founded the site in the late sixth century or that St Germanus made him the first abbot of the site.⁷⁶ There seems to be little to support this view other than the presence of a well in the valley of Llanccarfan that is called 'Dyfrig's Well'.⁷⁷ The *Life of St Cadog* makes no mention of any connection of the site with St Germanus or St Dyfrig, attributing the foundation to St Cadog alone.⁷⁸ More recent scholarship has dismissed these earlier traditions as being based on mistaken interpretations of the site. The name 'Llanccarfan' comes from the original name of the area 'Nantccarfan', where 'nant' was the valley through which the river 'Carfan' ran. The 'nant' element was changed to 'llan' after the church was founded there.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ G.T. Clark, 'Some Account of the Parish of Llanccarvan, Glamorganshire', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* Series 3 XI (1865), p. 344; T. Nicholas, *The History and Antiques of Glamorganshire and its Families* (London, 1874, Reprinted Cowbridge, 1970), p. 71; M.R. Spencer, *Annals of South Glamorgan* (Carmarthen, 1913, Reprinted Cowbridge, 1970), p. 80.

⁷⁶ Clark, 'Some Account of the Parish of Llanccarvan', p. 344; S. Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales* Vol. II (London, 1833), p. LLA; Nicholas, *The History and Antiques of Glamorganshire*, p. 71; R. Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints or the Primitive Christians usually considered to have been the Founders of Churches in Wales* (London, 1836), p. 176; Spencer, *Annals of South Glamorgan*, p. 80.

⁷⁷ Spencer, *Annals of South Glamorgan*, p. 79.

⁷⁸ Lifris, §8.

⁷⁹ G.O. Pierce, *The Place Names of Dinas Powys Hundred* (Cardiff, 1968), pp. 68-9.

There is a tradition that suggests that the current site of the monastery of Llanancarfan was not the site of St Cadog's original foundation. It has been suggested that the original foundation was located at Llanvithyn (Llanfeuthin) a site at the top of the same valley.⁸⁰ Llanvithyn has been known by several names including Bangor Cattwg and Bangor Garmon - a name which encouraged some to connect the site with St Germanus.⁸¹ Llanvithyn had an extra parochial status which has been interpreted as evidence that it was the original site of the monastery. However, it is more likely that this was due to the site being made a grange of Margam Abbey in the twelfth century.⁸² There is no real written or archaeological evidence that Llanancarfan was ever sited at Llanvithyn. In fact, the evidence suggests that the site was dedicated to St Tathan rather than a foundation of St Cadog. The place name 'Llanvithyn' comes from 'llan' and 'meuthin' suggesting that it was named for a church to Meuthin, another name for St Tathan. A grant was made to Margam Abbey in 1186-91 for the construction of a chapel to St Tathan at Llanvithyn, which was constructed at the site of an old cemetery there.⁸³ As the site was already named after St Tathan it may be that the grant for a chapel was intended to replace an older one. The chapel was located by the old cemetery where a church or chapel had most probably been located in the past. The presence of the pre-Norman burials at Llanvithyn make it likely that the site was the place described as the cemetery of Llanancarfan in the hagiography.⁸⁴ Llanvithyn was clearly an important local site for Llanancarfan, but the evidence suggests that it was a site connected to Llanancarfan rather than the original site of St Cadog's foundation in the area.

The hagiography creates a complex landscape around the site of Llanancarfan. It suggests that St Cadog's principal foundation did not just consist of a monastic structure but involved a number of other sites of interest in the vicinity within the valley, as was common for many major saints' cults in the early medieval period.⁸⁵ As mentioned already, St Cadog created a

⁸⁰ Clark, 'Some Account of the Parish of Llanancarvan', p. 345; Nicholas, *The History and Antiques of Glamorganshire*, p. 71; Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 177; Spencer, *Annals of South Glamorgan*, pp. 80, 84.

⁸¹ Clark, 'Some Account of the Parish of Llanancarvan', p. 345; Spencer, *Annals of South Glamorgan*, pp. 80, 84.

⁸² Clark, 'Some Account of the Parish of Llanancarvan', p. 345; Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 368.

⁸³ J.C. Davies, *Episcopal Acts and Cognate Documents Relating to Welsh Diocess, 1066-1272* Vol.II (Cardiff, 1948), pp. 673-4; J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 106; Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 369; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 85; M. Redknap & J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone and Stone Sculpture in Wales* Vol I (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 566-67.

⁸⁴ Lifris, §9; Knight, *South Wales*, pp. 85, 90; Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone*, pp. 566-67.

⁸⁵ See Chapter 5. The Saints' Cults of South Wales and the wider Celtic World.

cemetery for the monastery and surrounding countryside, probably at Llanvithyn. The hagiography also describes several other key sites: a monastic cell called Cadog's Kastil; Erw Wen, a special field; and a small chapel to St Finnian. Cadog's Kastil is described as a tumulus fort created for St Cadog.⁸⁶ This site probably corresponds to the local Iron Age fort of Castle Ditches which is located to the south-east of the main monastery.⁸⁷ The field, Erw Wen, is described as being a special site where St Cadog sowed his grain.⁸⁸ The hagiography also describes a chapel that St Cadog has erected for St Finnian near to Llancarfan after a miracle keeps a book dry in the rain.⁸⁹ Neither St Finnian's chapel of Erw Wen are identifiable in the modern landscape, but their presence in the hagiography suggests that they did hold an important place in the medieval landscape of Llancarfan. These sites would have created a complex religious landscape that would have appealed to pilgrims and encouraged them to go to the area.⁹⁰

The cult of St Cadog is also evident throughout the wider landscape of south Wales. As discussed above the cult of St Cadog was primarily connected to the kingdom of Glywysing. Glywysing was a kingdom of south-east Wales. Glywysing was the name for the area also known as Morgannwg and Glamorgan. However, the extent of the kingdom fluctuated throughout the early medieval period. In the earliest part of the period there was little distinction between Glywysing and Gwent. As discussed above they often shared a ruler, but when they had separate rulers there was no clear territorial divide that was set out between them.⁹¹ The *Life of St Samson* describes Gwent as being 'the next province to Demetia'.⁹² This would mean that Gwent would have to encompass the lands of Glywysing which lie between it and the kingdom of Dyfed. It suggests that in the late seventh century when the *Life of St Samson* was composed there was no distinction between Glywysing and Gwent. Glywysing in its own right is first mentioned as a kingdom in the *Annales Cambriae* in 865.⁹³ The *Life of St Cadog* does not include Gwent in the kingdom of Glywysing. This suggests

⁸⁶ Lifris, §9.

⁸⁷ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone*, p. 567.

⁸⁸ Lifris, §9.

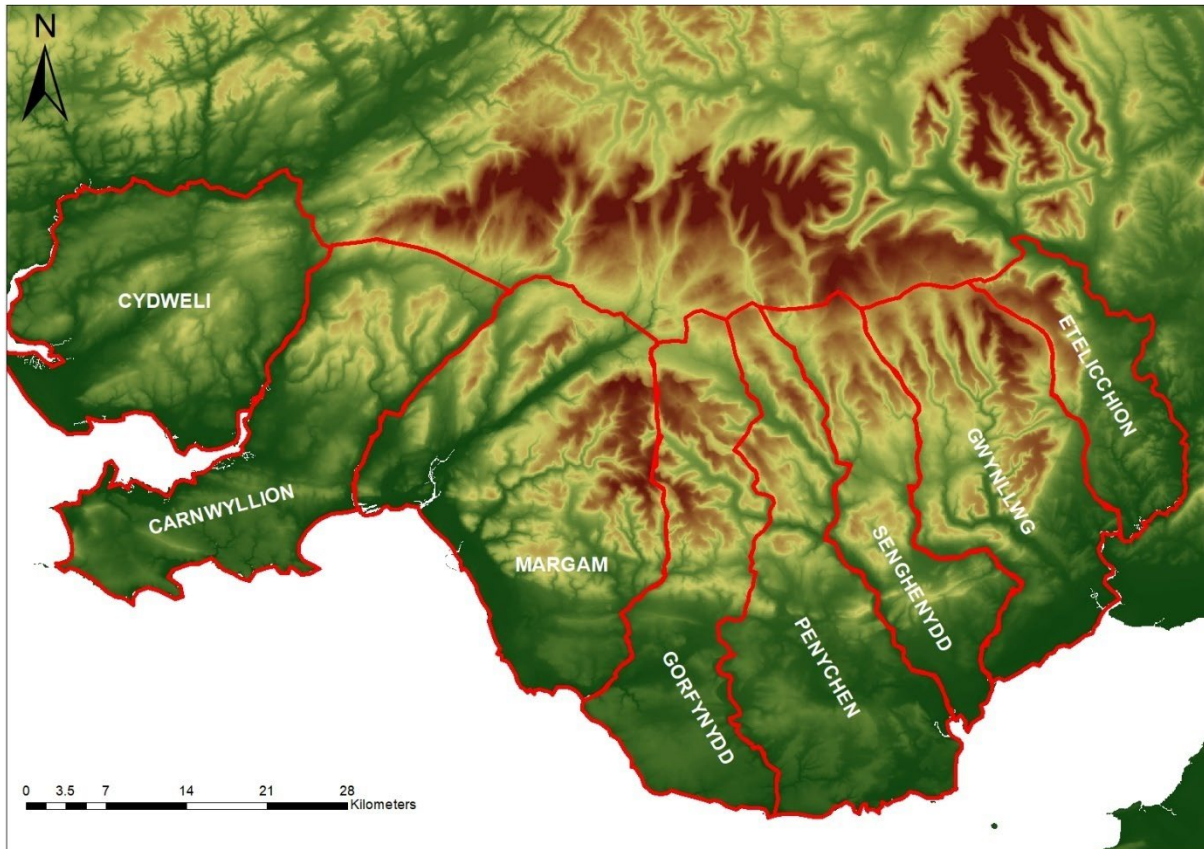
⁸⁹ Lifris, §12.

⁹⁰ H. James, 'The geography of the cult of St David: a study of dedication patterns in the medieval diocese' in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 49.

⁹¹ Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 102-3.

⁹² *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §1.

⁹³ *Annales Cambriae*, p. 55.



Map 1 The cantrefi of Glywysing

that in the first centuries of the period there was little distinction between the two kingdoms. The area continued to be referred to as both Glywysing and Gwent until the eleventh century.⁹⁴

The *Life of St Cadog* sets out its own borders for the kingdom as well as the cantrefi that formed it. Lifris describes nine cantrefi of Glywysing, each named after a son of Glywys, which stretched from the river Usk to the river Tywi: Gwynllwg, Etelicchion, Pennichen, Seruguunid, Gurinid, Margan, Chettgueli, Cornoguatlaun and Crucmetil.⁹⁵ While the rulers attached to these cantrefi by Lifris may be fictitious, the cantrefi correspond with real areas. Etelicchion (Edlogan) was situated in the area west of the Usk; Gwynllwg (Wentloog) was between the Usk and the Rhymney; Seruguunid (Senghenydd) was between the Rhymney and the Taff; Pennichen (Penychen) was between the Taff and the Thaw; Gurinid (Gorfynydd) between the Thaw and the Ogmor; Margan (Margam) lay between the Ogmor and the Tawe; Cornoguatlaun (Carnwyllion) was between the Tawe and the Loughor; and Chettgueli (Cydweli) lay between the Loughor and the Tywi. The final cantref, Crucmetil, is

⁹⁴ Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 103.

⁹⁵ Lifris, §1.

less certain.⁹⁶ These boundaries, as seen in Map 1, show the extent of the kingdom as seen by Lifris in the eleventh century. It is most likely that this representation of the kingdom does not reflect the situation as it appeared from the sixth to the eleventh centuries, but rather the state of affairs in south-east Wales in the second half of the eleventh century.⁹⁷ The cult of St Cadog was linked with the kingdom of Glywysing as already discussed and dedications to the saint are found across the area. More locally, he was linked to two of its cantrefi: Gwynllwg through his father and with Penychen by the location of Llancarfan.⁹⁸ The cult of St Cadog had much wider links to the landscape as can be shown by the distribution of the sites associated with the saint. There are nineteen sites with dedications to St Cadog in south Wales and several further sites connected to the cult of St Cadog. In Breconshire there are dedications at Llangatwg Crug Hywel and Llanspyddid; in Carmarthenshire there are sites at Llangadog and Llangadog Kidwelly; in Glamorgan at Cadoxton, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Gelligaer, Llancarfan, Llanedeyrn, Llanfaes, Pendeulwyn, Pentyrch and Port Eynon; in Monmouth at Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon, Llangatwg Nigh Usk, Llangatwg Lingoed, Llangatwg Feibion Afel, Llangadog Penrhos and Trevethin. There is also a single dedication to St Cadog in Anglesey at Llangadog in Amlwch, which for the purposes of this chapter will not be addressed as the site is so far removed from the main area of distribution.⁹⁹ As can be seen in Map 2 these dedications cover a broad area across south Wales.

The lack of written material from Wales in the early medieval period means that there is no evidence for the foundations of these sites. However, all the sites listed above are attested in the late medieval period. Several of the sites are found in the *Life of St Cadog* itself. Llancarfan, Llanspyddid and Llanfaes all appear in the hagiography.¹⁰⁰ The Llancarfan Charters also possibly refer to Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon. A grant near Caerleon, presumably Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon, is mentioned in charter 60.¹⁰¹ Although charter 60 is not one of the credible charters from the group, the appearance of the site in the charters does show that it existed at least by the eleventh century when the manuscript was compiled. Pentyrch appears in a papal bull of 1128, in a list of properties confirmed to Llandaf.¹⁰² The

⁹⁶ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 74.

⁹⁷ Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 386; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 74.

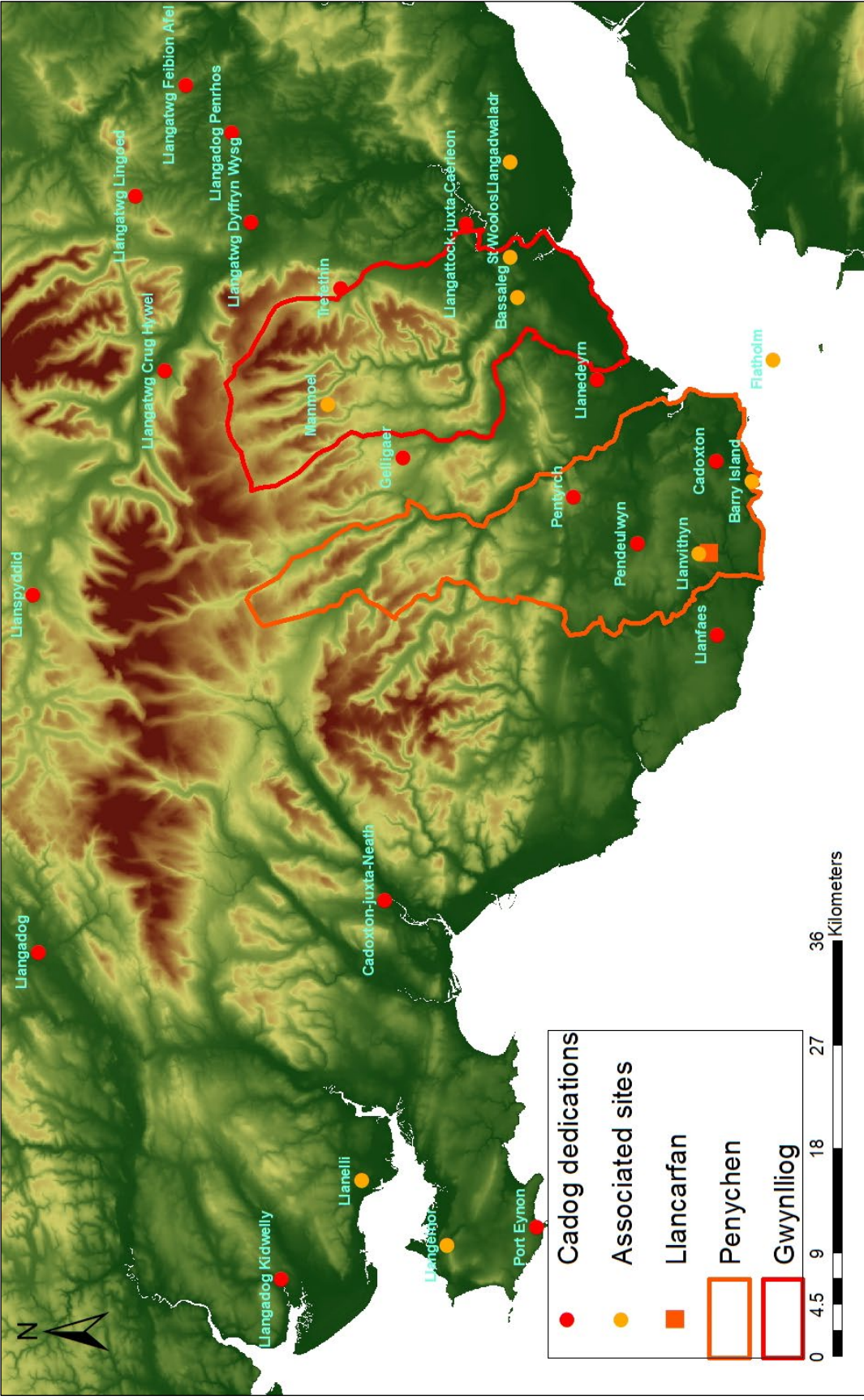
⁹⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 601.

⁹⁹ N. Orme, *The Saints of Cornwall* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 80-81; Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, pp. 323-24, 329-30, 335-38, 342-44; A.W. Wade-Evans, *Parochiale Wallicanum* (Stow-on-the-Wold, 1911), pp. 17, 28-55, 73.

¹⁰⁰ Lifris, §§11, 12, 24.

¹⁰¹ Lifris, §60; A.W. Wade-Evans, 'The Llancarfan Charters', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 87 (1932), p. 164.

¹⁰² J.C. Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, p. 622.



Map 2 Sites dedicated to St Cadog or associated with the cult of St Cadog in south Wales

1254 *Valuation of Norwich* has references to Pendeulwyn, Cadoxton, Gelligaer, Llanedeyrn, Llangatwg Lingoed, Llangatwg Feibion Afel, Llangatwg Nigh Usk, Trevethin, Llangadog Penrhos and Cadoxton-juxta-Neath.¹⁰³ Llangadog, Llangadog Kidwelly, Llangatwg Crug Hywel and Port Eynon appear in the slightly later in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV* in 1291.¹⁰⁴

The majority of the dedications lie within Glywysing, with a few outlying dedications in Gwent and Brycheiniog. Most of the dedications are in the lowland areas of Glywysing and Gwent, with a coastal distribution around the Gower. While the dedications in the east of the area are more numerous, those in the west at Cadoxton-justa-Neath, Llangadog and Llangadog Kidwelly had much larger parishes and had greater importance as individual sites.¹⁰⁵ St Cadog was connected to Gwynllwg and Penychen as already mentioned. St Cadog's primary link through his family, which is highly emphasised in the hagiography, is with the cantref of Gwynllwg. However, as Map 2 clearly shows there are no St Cadog dedications within this cantref. There are however several dedications in Penychen close to Llancarfan. No particular link is made between St Cadog and Penychen in the *Life of St Cadog*, except through the location of Llancarfan. The distribution does not support the idea of any connection between the cult of St Cadog and Gwynllwg. Instead, it suggests that the cult had wider connections with Glywysing as a whole. This can be seen in the fact that there are St Cadog dedications in each of the cantrefi of the kingdom all the way across to Cydweli. The emphasis in the hagiography that is placed on Gwynllwg may be due to the fact that there are three sites associated with the cult of St Cadog in that area, Bassaleg, St Wollos and the Church of Macmoil. These sites were obviously important to Llancarfan and so the connection to them is highlighted through creating a connection between St Cadog and the cantref in the hagiography, to reflect the connection between Llancarfan and these foundations in the late eleventh century.

There are two main clusters of dedications: one in south-east Glamorgan around Llancarfan and one in Gwent Uwch Coed.¹⁰⁶ There are four sites in the cluster around Gwent Uwch Coed. Llangatwg Crug Howel, Llangatwg Nigh Usk, Llangatwg Lingoed and Llangatwg Vibon Avel are all sites close to each other and share the same 'Llangatwg' aspect of their

¹⁰³ *The Valuation of Norwich*, pp. 315-24.

¹⁰⁴ *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*, pp. 272-3.

¹⁰⁵ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

¹⁰⁶ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, p. 39; J. Knight, 'Society and Religion in the Early Middle Ages', in M. Aldhouse-Green & R. Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History I* (Cardiff, 2004), p. 280.

names. St Cadog dedications have several name forms including ‘Cadoxton’ and ‘Llangadog’. ‘Llangatwg’ is one variation of the name which is found only in this group of dedications near Gwent Uwch Coed. The name of each dedication is formed from the ‘Llangatwg’ stem added to a name of a location like ‘nigh Usk’ or ‘vibon Avel’ which refer to the rivers that the sites are on. The ‘Llangatwg’ form of the name preserves the Welsh version of it, while ‘Cadoxton’ is the result of English influence on the name.¹⁰⁷ This suggests that the area around Gwent Uwch Coed where these dedications are found remained Welsh in identity and did not experience the same kind of English influence that places like Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, a site on the main east-west road in south Wales would have experienced. The second cluster around Llancarfan has a very different character. Of those sites located around Llancarfan only one, Cadoxton-juxta-Barry, has a place name that retains a ‘Cadog’ element- the rest have names that bear no reference to the saint. Some of these sites without a ‘Cadog’ element in their name may be early dedications, founded when the ‘llan’ was coupled with topographical features, in the period before the end of the seventh century when ‘llan’ began to be associated with saints’ names.¹⁰⁸ This would probably be the case for sites like Llanmaes. Other sites like Gelligaer preserve older names not connected to any foundation. In other cases, the lack of ‘Cadog’ markers in the place names suggests that some of these sites were not originally dedicated to St Cadog: rather these sites were absorbed into the cult of St Cadog and became ‘Cadog’ dedications through their association with Llancarfan and the cult of St Cadog.

Although Llancarfan is seen as the primary foundation of the cult of St Cadog, the distribution of St Cadog dedications suggests that in the early part of the medieval period there may have been a focus on those sites in Gwent Uwch Coed. The location of the sites suggests that they must have been founded before the kingdoms of Gwent and Glywysing became separate, so possibly some time before the ninth century. The fact that there is a cluster of sites at Gwent Uwch Coed that all contain a ‘Cadog’ element in their place name suggests that they may have been part of a group of churches founded as part of a movement of expansion of the cult of St Cadog during this period. Some of the sites around Llancarfan that have names that suggest that they were not originally St Cadog dedications, like Pendeulwyn and Pentyrch, may have been part of a later expansion of the cult which absorbed other nearby sites into the mother church of Llancarfan.

¹⁰⁷ Pierce, *The Place Names of Dinas Powys Hundred*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁸ Davies, ‘The Saints of South Wales’, p. 393.

It has long been noted that several of the sites with St Cadog dedications have Roman associations. Llancarfan, Gelligaer, Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon, Llangadog Penrhos, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath and Llanspyddid all appear in a Roman context.¹⁰⁹ Llancarfan, Llangadog Penrhos, Llangattock-juxta-Caeleon, Gelligaer and Cadoxton-juxta-Neath all lie by Roman roads. Several of the sites are also located near Roman forts. Llangattock-juxta-Caeleon lies by the Roman legionary fortress at Isca. Gelligaer is located by Gelligaer fort; Cadoxton-juxta-Neath across the river from Neath fort; and Llanspyddid lies on the opposite side of the Usk from Brecon Gaer fort.¹¹⁰ Jeremy Knight also suggested Monmouth as a St Cadog site with Roman associations.¹¹¹ However, Wade-Evans recorded that the church at Monmouth was historically dedicated to St Mary and St Thomas, not St Cadog.¹¹² Rice Rees did not include Monmouth in his list of sites dedicated to St Cadog.¹¹³

There are two main reasons why these sites may have been founded in these locations: the ease of access and the prestige that association with the Roman past may have given them. The fact that these sites were associated with Roman roads is not really an indication that they were deliberately placed in a Roman context, but rather a reflection of the fact that the Roman roads continued to be the main routeways across south Wales through the medieval period. The sites' location by roads is merely a sign that those who founded them travelled along these roads and wanted to create foundations on easily accessible routeways to enable easy travel between them.¹¹⁴ As with the links made between St Cadog and a Roman ancestry, the association of these St Cadog dedications and Roman forts was probably not an indication of Roman continuity, but shows that the sites were attractive for their connotations of power.¹¹⁵ It is interesting to note that all the dedications with Roman associations appear in military contexts rather than a secular one: they all appear near Roman forts and none appear

¹⁰⁹ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, p. 39; J. Knight, 'Glamorgan AD 400-1100: Archaeology and History', in H.N. Savory (ed.) *Glamorgan County History II* (Cardiff, 1984), p. 327; Knight, 'Society and Religion', p. 280; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

¹¹⁰ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

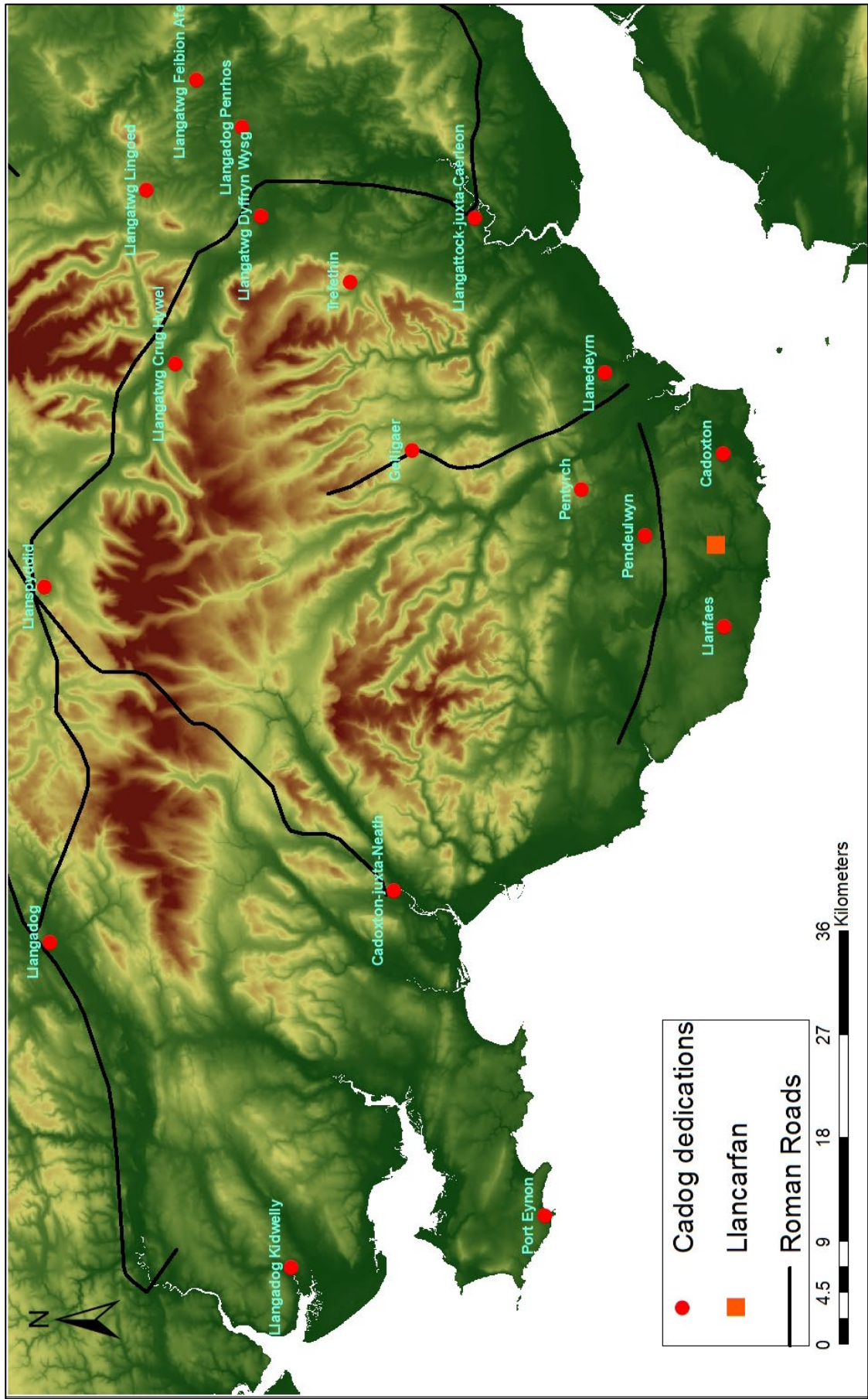
¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹¹² Wade-Evans, *Parochiale Wallicanum*, p. 92.

¹¹³ Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, pp. 177-78.

¹¹⁴ Knight, *South Wales.*, p. 91.

¹¹⁵ Roberts, *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic*, p. xlvi; Knight, *South Wales.*, p. 91.



Map 3 Sites dedicated to St Cadog in a Roman context

in the context of any Roman settlements. The Roman forts would have been prominent features in the post-Roman landscape and the association of a saint's cult with them would have placed the cult in an equally prominent position, making them focal points in the local landscape. This suggests that the cult of St Cadog was taking advantage of the Roman impact on the Welsh landscape to place itself in a powerful position with easy access between foundations.

Early medieval inscribed stone sculptures were a prominent feature of ecclesiastical sites in the period. Inscribed stones are found at a number of St Cadog dedications. At Llancarfan there is the remains of the upper part of a cross shaft with a sunken panel of interlace pattern dated to the late ninth century-tenth century and a slightly later eleventh to twelfth century partial inscription.¹¹⁶ Cadoxton-juxta-Neath has two inscribed stones associated with the foundation. One stone has a seventh-eighth century cross on one side and a second ninth century cross on the opposite side. The second stone has three rough crosses and an inscription from the eighth- ninth century and two relief crosses and a second inscription from the ninth-tenth century.¹¹⁷ Llanspyddid has a stone with an eighth-ninth century cross and a second tenth- early eleventh century cross on the top of the stone.¹¹⁸ Gelligaer has a stone with an incised ring cross from the eighth- ninth century.¹¹⁹ Llangattock-juxta-Caeleon has a fragment of a cross with an ornamental ring cross from the tenth-eleventh century.¹²⁰ The dates of the inscriptions may reflect two phases of erection of stone sculptures by the cult of St Cadog. The first phase between the eighth and ninth centuries saw the erection of stone sculptures at Llancarfan, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Llanspyddid and Gelligaer. A second phase in about the eleventh century saw the construction of a sculpture at Llangattock-juxta-Caeleon, and the addition of further decoration to the sculptures at Llancarfan, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath and Llanspyddid. However, since the stones cannot be more closely dated, the stones may not have been erected according to these phases at all.

All the sites that have stone monuments are also found in a Roman context. The presence of the stones suggests that these sites were important in the period to be able to attract patronage. It may be that local rulers also wanted to associate themselves with these sites with Roman connections to gain status themselves and so chose to patronise these sites.

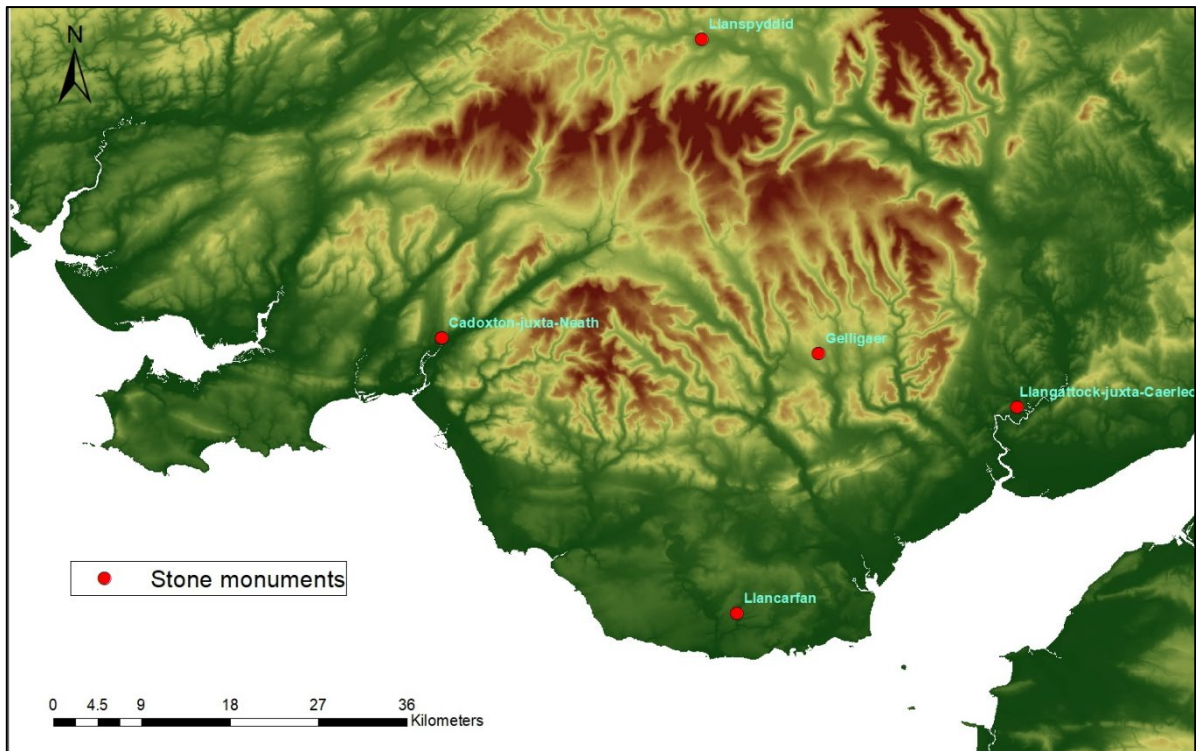
¹¹⁶ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone*, pp. 319-20.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 273-276.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-24.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 503-4.



Map 4 Inscribed stones found at sites dedicated to St Cadog

There are examples of rulers occupying Roman sites themselves at Caerleon and Monmouth in Glamorgan. Gelligaer continued to be a site used by local rulers until the fourteenth century, a fact that probably helped the success of the church there.¹²¹ However, it seems likely that the importance of these sites did not lie with their proximity to Roman remains. There would of course have been some status to be gained from the association with the Roman past, as with the claims to Roman ancestry. Those who founded these churches may have chosen their locations for the relation to Roman forts. However, the success of these sites was not simply due to the influence that proximity to Roman ruins could give them. It seems most likely that these sites were successful and became important churches in the cult of St Cadog because of the same reason that the Romans originally chose to erect their forts at the location: the presence of key crossroads. As Map 3 shows, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Llanfynydd and Llangattock-juxta-Caeleon were all located at important crossroads. These crossroads would have been important sites in the period, along the main east-west and north-south routes and along the Usk Valley, which would have made them the main points for travel to England and north and mid Wales. This would have made these locations easily accessible to pilgrims and natural resting points for travellers. It would have brought money and business into the areas, making them ideal sites for prosperous churches. These areas

¹²¹ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

were important enough to be the seats of local rulers. Hen Gastel overlooked Cadoxton-juxta-Neath and a Llys court at Brecon was found opposite Llanspyddid.¹²² While the attempt to try and gain legitimacy by being connected to sites from the Roman past may have been the reason that a number of St Cadog dedications are found in a Roman context, their success was clearly due to their proximity to important crossroads and local seats of power rather than their proximity to Roman forts.

As well as sites that were dedicated to St Cadog himself, there were also several other sites in south Wales that were associated with the cult of St Cadog. These sites are marked on Map 2. They include Bassaleg, St Woolos, Llangeinor, Llanelli, Manmoel, Llanvithyn, Flatholm, Barry and Llangadwaldr. The first six of these sites are all dedicated to saints that were associated with St Cadog as described above. Bassaleg, St Woolos, Llangeinor were all connected to the cult of St Cadog through their patron's family ties to St Cadog. Bassaleg was the church of St Gwladys, St Cadog's mother and was also given to Llancarfan in a charter.¹²³ St Woolos was the church of St Gwynllyw, the father of St Cadog. The site also features in an episode of the *Life of St Cadog*.¹²⁴ Llangeinor is the principal church in Wales dedicated to St Ceinwen, an aunt of St Cadog. While St Cadog had many saintly uncles and aunts, as detailed above, Ceinwen was clearly connected to St Cadog as in the *Life of St Ceinwen* St Cadog visits his aunt, ministers to her at her death and has her buried at Llangeinor.¹²⁵ This suggests that the site was probably connected to the cult of St Cadog.

Three of the sites associated with the cult of St Cadog were linked to the teacher and disciples of St Cadog. As already discussed above, Llanvithyn was dedicated to St Tathan, the teacher of St Cadog. St Tathan had his main monastic foundation at Caerwent, which may also have had connections with the cult of Llancarfan. Macmoil, one of St Cadog's main disciples had a church at Manmoel. The foundation of this site is described in one of the Llancarfan Charters.¹²⁶ Llanelli was the church of St Cadog's disciple and successor St Elli. As with Manmoel, the foundation of this site is also described in one of the Llancarfan Charters.¹²⁷ Knight suggested that the St Cadog dedications spread from these three sites. This could be true of the western dedications, where Llanelli could have spread the cult to the sites at

¹²² Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

¹²³ Lifris, §59.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, §28.

¹²⁵ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints*, p. 52.

¹²⁶ Lifris, §58.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, §63.

Kidwelly, Llangadog and Port Eynon, but Manmoel is not in a position with other dedications nearby, which suggests that it was never a centre of dispersal.

The final three sites, Flatholm, Barry and Llangadwaldr are associated with St Cadog in the *Life of St Cadog* and the Llanancarfan Charters. Flatholm and Barry are both sites that appear in the hagiography as places that St Cadog spent Lent. These are both island sites. Many saints' cults have island sites associated with them, as with St Davids and Ramsey. Llangadwaldr is a site granted to Llanancarfan in the Llanancarfan Charters. Llangadwaldr, identified here as Bishton, Monmouthshire, is granted to Llanancarfan in charter 67.¹²⁸ The charter is dated to the late seventh century showing that the site was connected to Llanancarfan for much of the early medieval period.

The *Life of St Cadog* mentions several other sites related to the cult of St Cadog. Many of the sites mentioned are not possible to identify, like Erw Wen at Llanancarfan or the Black Bog near the school of St Tathan.¹²⁹ However, there are a number of sites mentioned in the *Life of St Cadog* which are easily identified: Llanancarfan, Llanspyddid, Llanllywri, Llanfaes, Eglwys Wynllyw, Flatholm and Barry. Llanancarfan was St Cadog's principal monastery and has a central role in the hagiography.¹³⁰ Llanspyddid was granted to St Cadog by his grandfather Brychan.¹³¹ Llanllywri is described as a site on the river Neath and is generally thought to refer to Cadoxton-juxta-Neath.¹³² Llanfaes is mentioned in relation to a detail about fishing rights on the river Neath.¹³³ Eglwys Wynllyw is the church of St Woolos where St Cadog is summoned to the deathbed of his father.¹³⁴ Both Flatholm and Barry are mentioned as the sites of St Cadog's Lenten residence, as mentioned above.¹³⁵ The inclusion of each of these sites marks them out as important to the cult of St Cadog in the eleventh century when Lifris was writing. Llanancarfan was obviously important as the principal monastery of the cult. Llanspyddid and Cadoxton-juxta-Neath were both sites with Roman associations and were located at important crossroads on the main routeways of south Wales. Llanspyddid was also the main foundation of Brycheiniog and was associated with the Llys court there.¹³⁶ St Woolos had replaced Bassaleg as the main church of Gwynllwg so may have had links to the

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, §67.

¹²⁹ Lifris, §§7, 9.

¹³⁰ Lifris, §§8, 9, 12

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, §11.

¹³² *Ibid.*, §§20, 21; Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone*, p. 579.

¹³³ Lifris, §24.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, §28.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, §18.

¹³⁶ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

ruling house of the area.¹³⁷ As the principal church of the cantref it would have been an important site with powerful connections so the monks of Llancarfan would have wanted to highlight their relationship with it. Llanfaes may not have been included because the site itself held any importance, but rather because the fishing rights associated with it were important to Llancarfan. Flatholm and Barry were important as island sites, as discussed. Each of these sites brought power to the cult in different ways: Llanspyddid and Cadoxton-juxta-Neath through their location; Llanspyddid and St Woolos by their connection to rulers; Llanfaes for certain fishing rights awarded to the monastery; and Flatholm and Barry for their liminal positions. For these reasons these particular sites were deemed to be important enough to Llancarfan for Lifris to include them in his *Life of St Cadog* rather than any other sites of the cult of St Cadog.

The charters appended to the *Life of St Cadog* refer to a series of properties that were granted to Llancarfan. There are fourteen charters, each of which refers to a different site, but of these only a handful are identifiable. These include Bassaleg, Llangadwaladr, Llanelli, Manmoel and Caerleon (most likely Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon).¹³⁸ However, of these grants only two are credible - those of Bassaleg and Llangadwaladr. Bassaleg is granted in a charter from the eighth century and Llangadwaladr in a charter from the late seventh century. The rest of the grants cannot be dated with any accuracy, but clearly Llanelli, Manmoel and Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon were important to Llancarfan when the charters were appended to the *Life of St Cadog* in the twelfth century. Llanelli and Manmoel were both foundations of St Cadog's disciples, Elli and Macmoil who appear in the hagiography. The appearance of the saints in the hagiography and their foundations in the charters suggests that Llancarfan was trying to highlight that the two sites were part of the cult of St Cadog and therefore the property of Llancarfan. Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon must have been important in the tenth-eleventh centuries as it is in this period that an inscribed stone cross was erected on the site.¹³⁹ These sites held strong links to Llancarfan and their presence in the charters can be seen as an attempt by Llancarfan to ensure their rights over the properties.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Knight, 'Society and Religion', p. 277.

¹³⁸ Lifris, §§57-60, 63-67; Wade-Evans, 'The Llancarfan Charters', pp. 152-164.

¹³⁹ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone*, pp. 503-4.

¹⁴⁰ Knight, 'Glamorgan AD 400-1100', pp. 348-49.

Relics of the Cult of St Cadog

Relics were important throughout the medieval period, not just in Wales but across Europe. Secondary relics could include any objects connected to the saint or their cult and often had miraculous properties.¹⁴¹ There were several relics associated with St Cadog and his cult. However, as none of them survive it is only from accounts in the hagiography that anything is known of these relics. The *Life of St Cadog* describes five relics associated with the saint: a gospel book, a psalter, a bell, an altar and a shrine.

The gospel book associated with St Cadog is described both in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* and Caradog of Llancarfan's *Life of St Gildas*. The book is described as the Gospels of Gildas in the *Life of St Cadog* which describes the book's production by Gildas while he was at Llancarfan.¹⁴² The *Life of St Gildas* includes a similar story of the production of the gospel book, describing it as being covered in silver and gold.¹⁴³ The *Life of St Cadog* also describes how the book was used to swear upon in legal disputes.¹⁴⁴ The practice of swearing on holy relics was common throughout the medieval period, and the episode serves to demonstrate the idea that the Gospels of Gildas were considered to be a holy relic. The book is also referred to in the charters appended to the *Life of St Cadog*. In the charter the book is referred to as 'the book of Cadog' rather than the Gospels of Gildas, but it is clear that it refers to the same object.¹⁴⁵ The charter records the gifting of land by Bronnoguid so 'that his name might be written in the book of Cadog at Nantcarfan'.¹⁴⁶ This suggests that the charters may have originally been written in the margins of the gospel book, a common practice in the period - charters are found in the margins of several medieval gospel books including the Lichfield Gospels and the Bodmin Gospels.¹⁴⁷ The Gospels of Gildas would have been a prized treasure of Llancarfan. There are only records of two early medieval gospel books in Wales, one at Llandeilo, the Lichfield Gospels, and the gospel book at Llancarfan. Owning this gospel book would have marked Llancarfan out as being a site of high status and with considerable income: a great deal of time and money would have been required to create such

¹⁴¹ N. Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology' in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 225-65.

¹⁴² Lifris, §34.

¹⁴³ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §8.

¹⁴⁴ Lifris, §33.

¹⁴⁵ Lifris, §56; Knight, 'Glamorgan AD 400-1100', p. 348.

¹⁴⁶ Lifris, §56.

¹⁴⁷ W. Davies, 'The Latin charter-tradition in western Britain, Brittany and Ireland in the early medieval period', in D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick & D. Dumville (eds.), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 259; D. Jenkins & M.E. Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels Part 1' *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* V (1983) pp. 37-66; Knight, 'Society and Religion', p. 281.

a book. As such, out of all the relics associated with St Cadog it is probably the Gospels of Gildas that bear the most significance for the cult of St Cadog, representing the high status that the cult gained and the important legal position it gave Llanccarfan.

Another slightly lesser book, either a psalter or mass book, was also associated with St Cadog. The book is described in an episode in which it is saved from rain by a miracle. After the miracle the book is named 'Cob Cadduc' (*Cof Cadog*) and a chapel is erected on the site of the miracle.¹⁴⁸ As the miracle concerns one of St Cadog's disciples, Finnian, the book may also have had links to St Finnian. There is no other mention of this book beside that in the *Life of St Cadog*, so little can be said about it. The fact that the book has its own name suggests that there may have been a mass book that was thought to be a relic of St Cadog. The name itself means 'Cadog's memorial' which may suggest that it was named in memory of St Cadog. The book may have been seen as a relic of St Cadog's and became linked with the episode as it involved a miracle about a book. While little about this particular relic is clear, it is evident that there was a definite emphasis in the cult of St Cadog on the importance of the written word. Llanccarfan was considered to be a centre of learning in south Wales, which may explain why two of the relics associated with Llanccarfan were books.

The bell was a popular relic in medieval Wales. Many saints were associated with them, and several still survive.¹⁴⁹ St Cadog is described as owning a bell that was made by Gildas. As with many relics there is a miracle story attached to the bell which explains how the bell was given to St Cadog. The most important part of the episode in the *Life of St Cadog* is found in the blessing that the pope gives the bell: he says that oaths should be made on the bell and that the bell would be a sacred symbol of sanctuary for all of Wales.¹⁵⁰ This demonstrates how the bell was most likely used by the monks at Llanccarfan in the eleventh century and possibly before. The story of how the bell was made and eventually given to St Cadog is repeated in the later *Life of St Gildas*, suggesting that the bell was still a relic at Llanccarfan when this Life was written.¹⁵¹

Another relic of the cult of St Cadog was an altar that was presumably kept at Llanccarfan. There is little known about this altar besides what is described in the *Life of St Cadog*. In it St

¹⁴⁸ Lifris, §12.

¹⁴⁹ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 255; J. Fisher, 'The Welsh Celtic Bells', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 81 (1926), pp. 330-32; Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 370.

¹⁵⁰ Lifris, §27.

¹⁵¹ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §6-7.

Cadog sees three stones in Jerusalem which he thinks would make good altars. These three stones are then transported miraculously from Jerusalem to Llancarfan. He gives two of the stones to his disciples Elli and Macmoil.¹⁵² This distribution of the altars clearly demonstrates the links between the cult of St Cadog and St Elli and St Macmoil. Unfortunately, as there is no other description of these altars and they no longer survive, there is little more that can be said about them.

The last relic associated with the cult of St Cadog was a portable shrine. The shrine does not appear in the *Life of St Cadog* itself, but in one of the episodes that occurred after his death. The episode describes how the clergy of Llancarfan fled with ‘the shrine of the saint’ from a band of attacking Danes and English.¹⁵³ There is no description of what the shrine contained. While it was common practice in much of Europe by the eleventh century for monasteries to hold shrines with the bodily remains of their patron saints, this was not so in Wales. It is unlikely that the shrine contained any corporeal relics of St Cadog, both because it was not a common practice in Wales and because the elaborate *passio* of the *Life of St Cadog* seems to have been composed entirely to explain why Llancarfan did not have the body of St Cadog.¹⁵⁴ It is possible that the shrine may have held the bell that Gildas made. There was a trend that led to many relic bells being enclosed in shrines which could have been the case here.¹⁵⁵ However, as there are no remains or records of the shrine it cannot be said with any certainty what it contained. The purpose of the episode involving the shrine seems to be very similar to many of the episodes described above that described rulers attacking the lands of St Cadog: the result is to show the terrible things that would happen to any who dared to attack the property of Llancarfan in order to ensure their safety. The final line of the episode reads ‘afterwards they lacked inclination to plunder the monasteries of the afore-mentioned patron and also ceased to devastate his lands.’¹⁵⁶ Although the attackers in this case were the English and Danes it is clear that the message contained in this line applies to any who would violate the lands belonging to the cult of St Cadog- an idea that would have been very prominent in the period that saw the Norman conquest of south Wales.

¹⁵² Lifris, §§14-15.

¹⁵³ Lifris, §40.

¹⁵⁴ Lifris, §39; Edwards, ‘Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology’, p. 251; Knight, ‘Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg’, p. 388; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 89.

¹⁵⁵ Fisher, ‘The Welsh Celtic Bells’, p. 333.

¹⁵⁶ Lifris, §40.

The cult of St Cadog thus had at least five relics associated with it. This alone marks the cult out as having had a high status. Gospel books were expensive to produce, as were prayer books, so the fact that both were associated with Llancarfan suggests that the site would have been quite wealthy in the period. The *Annales Cambriae* record that Llancarfan had been one of a number of religious houses that had been laid to waste by the Danes in 988.¹⁵⁷ The other sites that were mentioned in this entry were in more coastal locations than Llancarfan. This suggests that in 988 Llancarfan may have had a reputation as a wealthy ecclesiastical house, with precious possessions like a gospel book, which acted as an incentive for the extra effort to raid the site.

Relics were not only strong symbols for the cult of a saint but were also great attractions for pilgrims. This would have made Llancarfan an appealing place and given the cult greater prestige. The fact that there are mentions of two of the relics, the Gospels of Gildas and Gildas' bell, being used to swear oaths suggests that Llancarfan played a key role in secular rule as well as being an ecclesiastical symbol. This would have greatly added to the status of Llancarfan in the period. Unfortunately, this is all that can really be said about the relics as there is a lack of any evidence beyond that found in the hagiography and the charters.

Changes in the Twelfth Century

The best written evidence available for the cult of St Cadog comes from the hagiographical sources. So far, the discussion has concentrated on the *Life of St Cadog* written by Lifris, but there is a second medieval *Life of St Cadog* by Caradog of Llancarfan. Caradog was mentioned as a contemporary by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, assigning to him the responsibility of recording the rest of the Welsh kings from the late seventh century onwards.¹⁵⁸ This would suggest that Caradog was active in the second quarter of the twelfth century. It is thought that at this time he was the head of a school at Llancarfan which was responsible for the composition and editing of hagiographical material. Caradog is seen as a professional hagiographer, and was personally credited with also composing Lives of St Gildas, St Gwynllyw, St Tathan and St Cybi.¹⁵⁹ His *Life of St Cadog* is preserved in a German manuscript, *Gotha MS. 1.81*. The manuscript dates from the

¹⁵⁷ *Annales Cambriae*, p. 63.

¹⁵⁸ Geoffrey of Monmouth, p. 281.

¹⁵⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 108; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 126.

fourteenth century, but the text itself has been dated to c. 1120-50.¹⁶⁰ Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* provides an interesting comparison to the *Life of St Cadog* composed by Lifris and allows for insights into how the cult of the saint changed over the period.¹⁶¹

The *Life of St Cadog* that was composed by Caradog bears several marked differences to Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*. Caradog's version contains twenty-seven chapters, compared to the thirty-three chapters found in Lifris' *Life*. Caradog has also chosen to omit both the prologue and the preface. Caradog removed sixteen chapters that were present in Lifris' version but added six of his own chapters to the text (see Table 1). Those chapters that Caradog has taken from Lifris have been shortened, providing a much more concise version: the Vespasian text covers approximately thirty-eight folio pages while the Gotha text covers only eleven pages.¹⁶² This more concise version leaves out a lot of the details that were included by Lifris. Caradog has also altered the order in which some of the episodes appear. He placed a number of episodes at the end of the text that had appeared in the middle of Lifris' version. The two hagiographers followed the same narrative order in the first twenty episodes, but in Caradog's version the following six episodes have been displaced (see Table 2).¹⁶³ The only radical change that Caradog has made to the narrative comes in his final chapter, where he changed the manner in which St Cadog dies.¹⁶⁴ Hywel Emanuel suggested that there are five main changes that have occurred between the two *Lives of St Cadog*: a change in atmosphere and tone; the omission of some episodes; the introduction of new details; changes to traditional details; and a reordering of some chapters.¹⁶⁵

The reasons for these changes help to show how and why the cult of St Cadog changed over this period. On a very basic level these changes gave the *Life of St Cadog* a much wider appeal. Caradog's version would have been much easier to read and to reproduce as it was

¹⁶⁰ J. Knight, 'St Tatheus of Caerwent', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* 3.1 (1970-1), p. 31.

¹⁶¹ J.M. Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan in the Early Twelfth Century', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 37 (2019), p. 48.

¹⁶² H.D. Emanuel, *The Latin Life of St Cadoc: A Textual and Lexicographical Study* (MA Thesis, University of Wales, 1950), pp. iii, iv, xxxvii.

¹⁶³ Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', p. 52.

¹⁶⁴ Caradog, §27.

¹⁶⁵ Emanuel, *The Latin Life of St Cadoc*, p. lviii.

Episode	Lifris	Caradog
Kingdom and ruling family of Glywysing	Preface	-
Kidnap of Gwladus by Gwynllyw	Prologue	-
Miraculous signs before birth	§1	§1
Miracle of milk and honey	-	§2
Renewal of the miracle of milk and honey	-	§3
Arrival of St Tathan, miracle of his cow	§1	§4
St Tathan brings forth stream to baptise Cadog		§5
Baptism of Cadog		§6
Agreement made for Cadog to be educated by St Tathan	§4	-
Piety of Cadog's youth	-	§7
Miracle of baptism stream turning to mead and Cadog coming under the instruction of St Tathan	§6	§6
Punishment of the rustic who would not give Cadog fire	§7	§8
Smiting of the swineherd and granting of land to Cadog by Paul Penychen	§8	§9
Location of monastic buildings predicted by an angel		§10
Construction of Cadog's first monastery	§9	§11
Cadog travels to Ireland	§10	-
Return from Ireland and miracle of the hidden grain store	§11	-
Finnian and Macmoil driving stags and the saving of the book from rain	§12	§26
Angel tells St David to hold Synod of Brefi	§13	-
Barren queen given a child, Elli, who is granted into the care of Cadog	§14	§25
Murderer disappears into smoke	§15	§23
Three rocks transferred to Llancarvan from Jerusalem		§24
Robbers swallowed up in the earth	§16	-
Angel appeases Cadog's anger over the Synod of Brefi	§17	-
Robbers from Penychen, and Illtud converted and becomes a monk	§19	§12
Cadog granted land to build monastery on the bank of the Neath	-	§13
Master builder murdered and brought back to life by Cadog	§21	§14
Dispute between Cadog and Arthur	§22	§22
Cadog's vengeance on the men of Gwynedd after kidnap of a local girl	§23	-
Blinding of king Rhun	§24	-
Cadog rescues his uncle Rhain	§25	-
Cadog travels to Scotland and brings a giant to life	§26	§21
Miracle of Gildas' bell	§27	-
Cadog summoned to the deathbed of his father	§28	§15
Lands Cadog ruled over as abbot and prince	-	§16
Miracle of book found in the stomach of a fish	§29	§17
Wolves turned into stone	§30	§18

Bringing forth of healing spring in Cornwall	§31	§19
Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, returning with holy waters from the River Jordan	-	§20
Gospel of Gildas used to swear on in case of theft	§33	-
Gildas writes mass book called the Gospel of Gildas	§34	-
Cadog has a basilica built on an island with a bridge	§35	-
Rustic maimed by looking at the tombs of the disciples of Cadog	§36	-
Angel tells Cadog to go to Beneventum to become abbot there	§37	-
Elli visits Cadog each year	§38	-
Cadog dies at Beneventum	§39	§27

Table 3 Episodes in the two Lives of St Cadog

much shorter, containing most of the same information but in a more concise way, and leaving out details that would not have been relevant to a Continental audience, like descriptions of the local landscape and local rulers.¹⁶⁶ Arthur is the only native ruler that remains. Arthur would have been a popular figure, widely recognised by a Norman and Continental audience thanks to the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth.¹⁶⁷ Similarly, the many obscure place names present in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* have been removed leaving only place names that related either directly to the cult of St Cadog, like Llancarfan, or were major landmarks like the River Severn.¹⁶⁸ The specific details of Lifris' version would have appealed to a local audience, but would have meant little to a wider audience. This all suggests that Caradog was attempting to disassociate the *Life of St Cadog* with the local element in order to establish a more international cult.¹⁶⁹

However, this is a very simple view of why Caradog made his changes to the *Life of St Cadog* and would ignore the larger reasons that the text indicates. Caradog may well have been attempting to create a piece of hagiography that would have had a wider audience, but the purposes behind all his changes cannot be explained by a desire to merely simplify the text: if his only ambition was to simplify it he would not have added six extra chapters to the text.

The reasons behind many of the perceived simplifications can show much about the way the cult of St Cadog changed in the twelfth century. The native Welsh rulers who were omitted from Caradog's version of the *Life of St Cadog* were not left out just to appeal to a wider audience: rather they have been left out because the reason that they were included originally

¹⁶⁶ Lifris, §§11, 16, 23, 24, 25.

¹⁶⁷ Caradog, §§20, 22.

¹⁶⁸ Caradog, §§9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27.

¹⁶⁹ Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', pp. 52-3.

by Lifris no longer existed in Caradog's time. The importance of the guarantees granted to Llancarfan by different rulers in the hagiography has been discussed above. Brychan, Maelgwn Gwynedd, Rhun of Gwynedd and Rhain, son of Brychan are all rulers who grant Llancarfan guarantees of independence and protection.¹⁷⁰ When Caradog wrote his *Life of St Cadog* the political situation had changed considerably from Lifris' time. South Wales had been taken over by the Normans, with Glamorgan under the control of Robert fitz Hamo and, as already noted, Llancarfan itself had become the possession of St Peter's Cathedral, Gloucester c. 1095-1104.¹⁷¹ Llancarfan no longer had to deal with the threat of attack or lands being seized by different Welsh rulers. As a possession of Gloucester Llancarfan would have had the protection of an important Norman ecclesiastical institution. Caradog did not need to include the episodes which Lifris had used to ensure the safety and independence of Llancarfan: they simply were not required anymore.¹⁷²

This particular change has been viewed with some confusion. Emanuel interprets this change as a 'change in atmosphere' created in the *Life of St Cadog* by Caradog due to his different political background.¹⁷³ Similarly, Knight suggested that Caradog has taken the old tone of violence and revenge and turned it into one of penance.¹⁷⁴ However, this ignores the overall tone of the piece: they are interpreting the absence of the violent episodes involving the Welsh rulers as an absence in general for any violent tone. On the contrary, the violent tone which runs through Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* and is common in many of the early saints Lives is clearly still prominent in Caradog's composition. Caradog includes the violent episodes about the rustic who is burned for refusing St Cadog fire, the swineherd who was paralysed, the soldiers who were swallowed up by the earth, the beheading of the stonemason, the vengeance on Arthur and the transformation of Cynfelyn into smoke.¹⁷⁵ These episodes perform the same function as the violence found in the chapters with the Welsh kings: to show the power of St Cadog and the consequences of crossing him (or his cult). Proportionately, there are twelve violent events in thirty-three episodes in Lifris' version and six violent episodes found in twenty-seven episodes in Caradog's version of the Life: this does not represent a great difference between the two Lives. Nor do any of the episodes in Caradog's version introduce the forgiveness of any character that Lifris otherwise chose to

¹⁷⁰ Lifris, §§11, 23, 24, 25.

¹⁷¹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 106.

¹⁷² Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', p. 53.

¹⁷³ Emanuel, *The Latin Life of St Cadoc*, p. lviii.

¹⁷⁴ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 125.

¹⁷⁵ Caradog, §§8, 9, 12, 14, 22, 23.

punish. Thus, there is no great change in the violent atmosphere between the two Lives: Caradog's background in a more stable political environment has not resulted in a more peaceful approach to the *Life of St Cadog*, merely the omission of a few episodes which had become politically unnecessary.

In a similar way, the place names that are so prominent in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* were not omitted just to simplify the text. Llancarfan was granted to Gloucester sometime between 1095 and 1104, at which point her possessions were broken up and the tithes of Llancarfan granted to Tewkesbury.¹⁷⁶ The cemetery associated with Llancarfan which holds an important place in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* is noticeably absent in Caradog's version.¹⁷⁷ As already discussed, this site was most likely Llanvithyn, which at the time Caradog was writing had become a possession of Margam Abbey.¹⁷⁸ Similarly, the episode concerning the foundation of Llanspyddid is left out by Caradog as Brycheiniog was under the lordship of Bernard de Neufmarché and no longer belonged to Llancarfan.¹⁷⁹ It may also be important to note that the role of Gwladus, St Cadog's mother, is downplayed in Caradog's *Life of St Cadog*. This may reflect the fact that Gwladus' church, granted to Llancarfan in the Llancarfan Charters, had also become the property of Gloucester.¹⁸⁰

There are a number of sites that Caradog chose to highlight in his *Life of St Cadog*. The church of St Cadog's father, St Woolo's, remains in Caradog's version.¹⁸¹ It has not been left in because Llancarfan had any control over the church in the period but because the property was the subject of a dispute between Gloucester and Robert, Earl of Gloucester.¹⁸² Knight suggested that St Peter's Abbey used the *Life of St Gwynllyw* to support their claim over St Woolo's.¹⁸³ As both the *Life of St Gwynllyw* and Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* were products of the school at Llancarfan it would make sense for Gloucester to use their influence to highlight the connection between St Cadog and St Gwynllyw in the *Life of St Cadog* in order to promote their claims- St Woolo's belonged to Llancarfan, and therefore to them.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁶ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 24; J. Knight, 'The Parish Churches', in R.A. Griffiths, T. Hopkins & R. Howell (eds.) *The Gwent County History II* (Cardiff, 2008), p. 268.

¹⁷⁷ Lifris, §§9, 28.

¹⁷⁸ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 107.

¹⁷⁹ Emanuel, *The Latin Life of St Cadoc*, p. xxvii.

¹⁸⁰ Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', pp. 53-4.

¹⁸¹ Caradog, §15.

¹⁸² Knight, 'Society and Religion', pp. 278-9.

¹⁸³ Knight, 'St Tatheus of Caerwent', p. 35.

¹⁸⁴ Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', p. 54.

The second site that Caradog has retained in his *Life of St Cadog* is Cadoxton-juxta-Neath. Caradog not only kept the episode about the site but also chose to insert an extra chapter about it. While the early site at Cadoxton-juxta-Neath was clearly important in the medieval period before the Normans took over much of south Wales as discussed above, it is unclear what the status of the site after Llancarfan was granted to Gloucester. There is no record of Cadoxton-juxta-Neath being granted to any ecclesiastical institution, like Gloucester or Margam, nor to any lord in this period. The site continued to exist and survived well into the thirteenth century. The 1254 *Valuation of Norwich* records that ‘Vicaria Sancti Caddoci’ was present at Neath when the document was compiled.¹⁸⁵ An abbey was founded at Neath in 1111 by Richard de Granville for the Grey Friars but became part of the Cistercian order shortly afterwards.¹⁸⁶ The new site of Neath Abbey was located about a mile away from Cadoxton-juxta-Neath. In the *Valuation of Norwich* Cadoxton-juxta-Neath appears as the first site listed in the deanery of Groneath in the diocese of Llandaf.¹⁸⁷ In *The Taxation of Pope Nicholas* in 1291 the site is recorded as being in the deanery of Wenefeg, or Kenefez (Cynffig).¹⁸⁸ In the nineteenth century Archdeacon Thomas described this change in deanery as the site being ‘appropriated’ by Neath Abbey.¹⁸⁹ The status of the site in the second quarter of the twelfth century when Caradog wrote his *Life of St Cadog* is not recorded, and therefore unknown. The way that the site moved deaneries in the thirteenth century suggests that the site continued to be important and was being claimed by different deaneries. This may also have been the case in Caradog’s time. It is possible that Caradog chose to highlight Cadoxton-juxta-Neath because the site was under contention, in the same way as St Woolo’s, and Caradog was attempting to make a claim on it on behalf of either Llancarfan or Gloucester. Unfortunately, due to the lack of any record of the site in the second quarter of the twelfth century there is no way of knowing this for sure.¹⁹⁰

The relics of St Cadog played an important role in the early cult, as discussed above. It is significant that Caradog has chosen to largely ignore these objects in his *Life of St Cadog*. The three altars from Jerusalem have been included but the bell and gospel book have been left out. It is suggested that the reason for their absence was because when Llancarfan was

¹⁸⁵ *The Valuation of Norwich*, pp. 177, 323.

¹⁸⁶ Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, p. CAD.

¹⁸⁷ *The Valuation of Norwich*, p. 323.

¹⁸⁸ *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*, p. 279.

¹⁸⁹ Archdeacon Thomas, ‘The Norwich Taxation and the Diocese of Llandaff’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 5.6 (1889), pp. 106, 116.

¹⁹⁰ Bell, ‘Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan’, p. 55.

acquired by Gloucester the relics of St Cadog were moved there.¹⁹¹ The altar, which is mentioned, presumably remained at Llancarfan. However, the relics of the gospel book and bell, while not appearing in Caradog's *Life of St Cadog*, do appear in his *Life of St Gildas*.¹⁹² As Caradog is credited with composing both Lives it stands to reason that he must have known about the relics when composing the *Life of St Cadog*. The suggestion by Knight that the relics had been removed which is why they do not appear in Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* does not stand as in Caradog's *Life of St Gildas* the gospel book is described as 'a work which still remains in the church of St Cadoc'.¹⁹³ As Caradog's *Life of Gildas* is thought to have been composed after his *Life of St Cadog* it would suggest that at least the gospel book was still at Llancarfan when the *Life of St Cadog* was composed. The reason that Caradog omitted the relics from his *Life of St Cadog* but included them in his later *Life of St Gildas* remains unknown. It may be that the future of the relics was uncertain when Caradog wrote the *Life of St Cadog*, but that it was certain that they would remain by the time he came to write the *Life of St Gildas* which is why he includes episodes of both the bell and the gospel book in the *Life of Gildas*.

The changed status of Llancarfan and the cult of St Cadog is also evident in the absence of St David from Caradog's version of the *Life of St Cadog*. The chapters surrounding St David have been seen as evidence of the struggle between Llancarfan and St Davids over ecclesiastical power in Wales. It is clear from the absence of these chapters in Caradog's version that this struggle was no longer an issue: Llancarfan no longer had the status to contend with St Davids. This may also be reflected in Caradog's treatment of St Cadog's death. This is the only one of Lifris' chapters that Caradog actually changes significantly. Instead of spending a prolonged time in Beneventum and becoming bishop and abbot there before his chosen martyrdom, St Cadog rather goes to Beneventum on pilgrimage and gets ill and dies while there. This robs St Cadog of the status of both being a martyr and having been a bishop, meaning that Llancarfan can no longer claim episcopal status. This diminishes their status still further.

The diminished status of Llancarfan is also noticeable in Caradog's parameters of the lands St Cadog ruled. Map 1. above shows the nine cantrefi of Glywysing as set out in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*. When Caradog wrote the *Life of St Gwynllyw* the number of cantrefi had been

¹⁹¹ Knight, 'Society and Religion', p. 281; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 90.

¹⁹² *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §§6-8; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 125.

¹⁹³ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §8.

reduced to seven, though which cantrefi had disappeared is not said.¹⁹⁴ Lifris implied that Cadog ruled over all of Glywysing, which he gave to Meurig, his aunt's husband, except for Gwynllwg.¹⁹⁵ In Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* he is described only as 'abbot and prince over Gwynllwg' with no mention of any other lands.¹⁹⁶ The parameters of the lands that St Cadog ruled are described in detail:

from Ffynnon Hen, that is, from the Old Spring, as far as the mouth of the river Rhymi, and he was in possession of the whole territory from the stream Golych as far as the river Naddawan, from Pentrych straight to the valley of Nantcarfan, that is from the valley as far as the stream Gurimi, namely the little Rhymi, towards the sea.¹⁹⁷

The 'river Rhymi' can be identified as the Rhymney River; the 'stream Golych' is a stream that runs through the Dyffryn Golych valley; the 'river Naddawan' is the River Thaw; 'the valley of Nantcarfan' is obviously the valley of Llancarfan; and the 'stream Gurimi' or little Rhymi is the Goldsland Brook which connects with the Golych Brook.¹⁹⁸ The area made by connecting these points is shown on Map 5. It is clear that the area set out by Caradog does not cover the area that was Gwynllwg. The area instead covers the lowland areas of Senghenydd and Penychen. Gwynllwg had been under Norman control since before beginning of the twelfth century. The areas of lowland Senghenydd and Penychen may have been under less strict Norman control and therefore easier to claim for Llancarfan. Alternatively, the area may have been of interest to Gloucester and so Caradog was trying to claim it for Llancarfan. The main thing that the map highlights is that the area attributed to St Cadog has been drastically reduced. Llancarfan had staked a claim to all of Glamorgan in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*, but Caradog only claimed a small area of lowland Senghenydd and Penychen. This illustrates the diminished status of Llancarfan in the time of Caradog: in the late eleventh century Lifris had been able to claim the entirety of Glamorgan for the cult of St Cadog, while Caradog does not even claim an entire cantref.¹⁹⁹

It is interesting to note that the lands that Caradog claims for St Cadog include the parish of Llandaf. The period that Caradog was active reflects the end of the period that Bishop Urban was engaged in property disputes for Llandaf. Building work on the new Norman church at

¹⁹⁴ *Vita Sancti Gundleii*, §1; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 74.

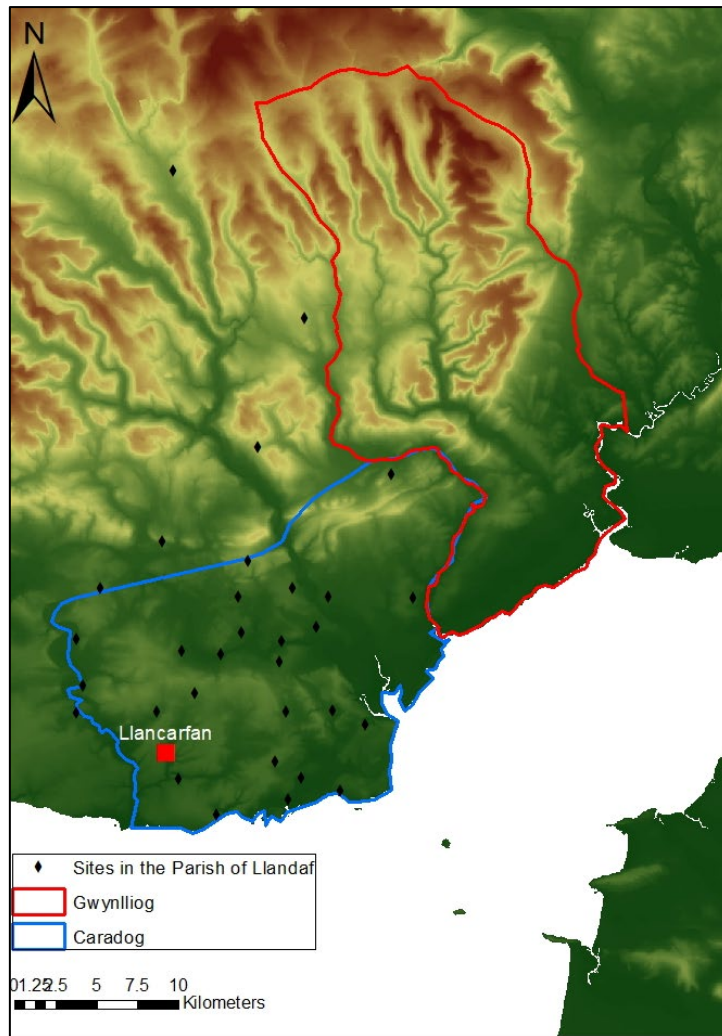
¹⁹⁵ Lifris, §25.

¹⁹⁶ Caradog, §16.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, §16.

¹⁹⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 601; Pierce, *The Place Names of Dinas Powys Hundred*, pp. 263-5; A.W. Wade-Evans (ed.), *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (Cardiff, 1944), p. 63f.

¹⁹⁹ Bell, 'Lifris, Caradog, and Llancarfan', p. 56.



Map 5 The lands ruled by St Cadog as described by Caradog of Llandaf and the properties in the deanery of Llandaf in *The Valuation of Norwich*

Llandaf did not begin until 1120.²⁰⁰ It is possible that when Caradog was writing Llandaf did not have firm control over the area Urban claimed for the parish of Llandaf, in the same way that he did not actually have control over many of the St Teilo dedications that he claimed.²⁰¹ It would make little sense for Caradog to claim lands for Llandaf which belonged to another powerful institution: the inclusion rather suggests that Llandaf did not yet have the control over south-east Wales that it claimed in the Book of Llandaf. *The Valuation of Norwich* lists all the sites that belonged to the parish of Llandaf in 1254.²⁰² These sites are shown on Map 5. As can be easily seen, these properties largely correlate with the area set out by Caradog as being ruled over by St Cadog, and by implication, Llandaf. It is possible that at the time that Caradog was writing Llandaf did not have control over these

²⁰⁰ W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979), p. 2.

²⁰¹ See Chapter 3. The Cult of St Teilo for further discussion of Llandaf's claims on St Teilo properties.

²⁰² *The Valuation of Norwich*, W.E. Lunt (ed.), pp. 314-16.

properties yet and that Llancarfan was attempting to compete with Llandaf over these properties, in a similar way that Llandaf competed with St Davids over properties of St Teilo. This suggests that while Llancarfan had lost most of its properties and land, and was no longer in competition with St Davids for supremacy of south Wales, it may have still been trying to compete with Llandaf, before it firmly became the dominant foundation of south-east Wales.

A last small but notable omission of Caradog's involves St Cadog's time in Ireland. Caradog includes St Cadog's many pilgrimages to Rome, Jerusalem and Scotland but his journey to Ireland has been ignored. It has been suggested that this episode is one of a group that relate to Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*.²⁰³ As the other episodes concerning St David have been omitted it would not be odd for this one also to be left out. However, the *Life of St Finnian* contains a similar tale of St Cadog travelling to Ireland and returning with St Finnian and a number of others.²⁰⁴ This suggests that the episode may preserve a real relationship that existed between Llancarfan and Clonard, and was not just designed to contend with St Davids. Its absence in Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* is suggestive of a move away from the Insular Church and focus on Ireland towards a more Continental orientated Church. Ireland plays a role in many of the Welsh saints Lives, but the fact that it has been left out here shows a change in the cultural outlook of those at Llancarfan during the twelfth century.

Conclusion

The cult of St Cadog changed considerably between the sixth and the thirteenth centuries. During this period the cult developed in several ways. The growth of the cult can be seen through the prominent position that Llancarfan came to claim and in the numerous dedications that were made to the saint across south-east Wales. The success of the cult of St Cadog was largely due to the relationships that the monks of Llancarfan cultivated and maintained throughout the period. The initial success of the cult can be attributed to the patronage of Meurig, ruler of Gwynllwg, and his successors during at least the seventh and eighth centuries. This patronage would have allowed the cult to flourish and grow in this early period. Llancarfan also seems to have held strong connections to Llanilltud Fawr and Llandough during this period. The relationship seems to have been close in the seventh

²⁰³ H.D. Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the 'Vita Cadoci'', pp. 220-22.

²⁰⁴ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 121

century, with members of each *familia* present to witness charters. As the period progressed and both Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr grew they became increasingly independent of each other, until by the end of the eighth century the relationship seems to have disappeared.

Although the relationship between Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr declined over the early part of the period examined, as the period progressed it is clear that the monks of Llancarfan chose to create relationships with more minor cults that could be taken over by the cult of St Cadog. The hagiography clearly shows how Llancarfan promoted the relationship between St Cadog and other minor saints who had their own foundations: his parents, Gwladus and Gwynllyw and his teacher, St Tathan are the most prominent examples. The foundations dedicated to these saints had become firmly part of the cult of St Cadog by the eleventh century.

The genealogy of St Cadog and Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* show that the monks of Llancarfan had also cultivated relationships between their patron saint and many ruling dynasties. The continuing patronage of the dynasty of Meurig is seen through the extensive dedications to St Cadog found across Glamorgan. Llancarfan created familial ties with the rulers of Glamorgan, the neighbouring area of Brycheiniog and the kingdoms of Gwynedd and Deheubarth to ensure the rights and privileges of the cult of St Cadog. In this way they were able to protect their vast network of foundations across south-east Wales.

By the eleventh century the cult of St Cadog was in a strong position. It appears to have been the primary cult of south-east Wales and to have had some rivalry with St David's in the west. Lifris' writings suggest that Llancarfan had become the site of an important monastic school with ambitions to produce hagiographical material. Its position as a centre of learning would have gained the site greater prestige and meant that those monks at the foundation would have been highly educated rather than simple monks or clergy. The status of Llancarfan itself is emphasised in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*, which sets out a developed pilgrim landscape around Llancarfan and promotes the prestigious collection of relics claimed by the foundation. The cult was also clearly trying to further elevate itself, as can be seen in the way Lifris attempts to portray St Cadog being above both St David and St Illtud, both important south Wales saints.

However, as the cult entered its final phase in the twelfth century these hopes were not realised. This period marks the collapse and decline of the cult of St Cadog. After the Norman conquest of south Wales the cult of St Cadog was virtually destroyed. Llancarfan

and its properties were divided up between Margam and Gloucester. Llancarfan remained the monastery of St Cadog and many of those churches dedicated to the saint retained their names but they were no longer part of a larger cult to the saint and their revenues no longer went to Llancarfan. The lands described by Caradoc in his *Life of St Cadog* portray a vast decrease in the lands that Llancarfan could even claim had been theirs in the past. This whole picture shows the speedy collapse of the cult of St Cadog at the beginning of the twelfth century: a loss of lands, properties and status.

This collapse did not mark the end of the cult of St Cadog, however. Llancarfan continued to be a centre of learning with a scriptorium and produced several saints' Lives during the course of the first half of the twelfth century, largely attributed to Caradoc of Llancarfan. While Caradoc's work show the decreased status of Llancarfan, they also show that Llancarfan was still firmly the centre of the cult of St Cadog, and was still an active foundation in the period. The exact distribution of the lands claimed by Caradoc for St Cadog closely mirror those that later belonged to Llandaf as I have explained above. This suggests that, while Llancarfan was no longer vying for position as the preeminent foundation in south Wales, they were still attempting to claim their position as the most important foundation of the south east. These claims were never achieved as can be seen by the high status that Llandaf gained, but it does show that even in the twelfth century the cult of St Cadog was still active and held a significant position, with an important monastic school that produced several important pieces of hagiography.

The Cult of St Illtud

St Illtud was a prominent saint of early medieval Wales. He was active during the late sixth century and early seventh century in south-east Wales, with his principal monastery at Llanilltud Fawr. Although the cult of St Illtud was found mainly in Wales, the saint was reputedly born in Brittany and there are dedications to the saint there.

The *Life of St Illtud* is found in *MS. Vespasian A.XIV*, ff.43v-52r, which is dated to c.1200, but the Life itself was probably written in the second quarter of the twelfth century, after the death of Robert Fitzhamon in 1107, who appears in §26 but before c. 1130-38 when Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, as St Dyfrig is referred to as the bishop of Llandaf rather than Geoffrey's label as the Archbishop of Caerleon.¹ The Life is most recently thought to have been written by someone from the school of Caradog of Llancarfan which was responsible for several saints' Lives in the same period, though Gilbert H. Doble argues against this as Llancarfan was a rival church to Llanilltud Fawr.²

St Illtud provides an important insight into the development of early medieval saints' cults in Wales. Although his Life is relatively late, there is material referring to the saint throughout the early medieval period, from the seventh century to the twelfth century. St Illtud first appears in the Breton *Vita I Sancti Samsonis* which was written sometime in the late seventh or early eighth century. Illtud appears in §7-§21 as the wise teacher of St Samson. The *Life of St Samson* is the best evidence for St Illtud as it was written only a century after the death of the saint, and claims to be based on an earlier *Life of St Illtud*.³ St Illtud also appears in several sources from the ninth century. The first of these is an episode in the *Historia Brittonum* which was written in the early ninth century. There are only two saints who appear in the *Historia Brittonum* which suggests that this episode was thought to be important. The episode describes how the body of a holy man with an altar floating above him arrives in Wales and how St Illtud buries the body and builds a church around him.⁴ St Illtud also appears in two Breton saints Lives; the ninth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian* by Wrmonoc and the eleventh-century *Life of St Gildas*. In the *Life of St Paul Aurélian*, as with St Samson

¹ S. Baring-Gould, & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III (London, 1911), p. 304; G.H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), p. 121.

² Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 121; J. Knight, *South Wales: From the Romans to the Normans* (Stroud, 2013) p. 40.

³ See Source Material for further discussion of the date of *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*.

⁴ *Historia Brittonum*, §71.

in the *Life of St Samson*, St Paul is sent to the school of St Illtud where he is taught by the saint.⁵ The same role is played out again in the *Life of St Gildas*. In it St Gildas goes to the school of St Illtud and studies under him along with other prominent figures like St Samson and St David.⁶ The last mention of St Illtud that is of interest is in the late eleventh-century *Life of St Cadog* by Lifris.⁷ He appears in a single episode where St Cadog gives him the tonsure and tells him to join the Church.⁸ These sources can reveal of how perceptions of St Illtud changed throughout the period.

Relationships of the Cult of St Illtud

St Illtud provides a unique picture of how relationships between a saint's cult and political and other ecclesiastical institutions changed from the sixth century to the twelfth century. The variety of sources from across the period show how the relationships between the cult of St Illtud, other saints' cults, and local rulers developed.

A saint's family often provides an important foundation for the political and ecclesiastical connections of the saint's cult. Prominent saints like St David and St Cadog are linked to the kingdoms of Ceredigion and Glywysing through their family ties. However, St Illtud does not have these important ties. The *Life of St Illtud* describes St Illtud's family in the opening episode: his father was Bicanus, a soldier descended from British princes; and his mother was Rheinwlydd, daughter of Amlawdd, king of *Britannia*, presumably referring to Wales.⁹ The second episode reveals that St Illtud is cousin to Arthur. This episode also introduces St Illtud's wife, Trinihid.¹⁰ No further description of the family of St Illtud is provided in *the Life of St Illtud*. In fact, these mentions in the hagiography are the only reference to the family of St Illtud that exist. There is no other known genealogy of the saint. St Illtud does not appear in any of the Welsh genealogies which detail the ancestry of the Welsh princes and saints. Similarly, neither of St Illtud's parents appear in any genealogies. St Illtud's grandfather, Amlawdd, is the closest relative that he has who appears in any genealogies. He appears in three genealogies: in the late thirteenth-century *Mostyn MS. 117* §6 and in the fourteenth-century *Bonedd yr Arwyr* §31 he is found in the genealogies of Arthur as the

⁵ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §§1-7.

⁶ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §§3-6.

⁷ See Introduction: Sources for further discussion of the dating of the *Life of St Cadog*.

⁸ Lifris, §19.

⁹ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, §2.

father of Eigyr, mother of Arthur; in *Bonedd yr Arwyr* §29, and in the fourteenth-century *Jesus College, Oxford, MS. 20* §7, he appears as the husband of one of the daughters of Cunedda Wledig, Gwen.¹¹ Brynley Roberts has suggested that Amlawdd was a fictitious character that was used to create connections between prominent figures and Arthur.¹² Amlawdd therefore holds little significance himself, but holds importance through his position as the ‘grandfather’ of Arthur: through him St Illtud becomes the cousin of Arthur.

It is probable that the actual family connections of St Illtud were unknown and that the names given in the hagiography were invented by the author.¹³ The invention seems to be mainly focused on creating a connection between the saint and Arthur, a powerful proto-king who would add legitimacy and power to St Illtud.¹⁴ Significantly, the hagiographer has chosen Arthur as the powerful figure related to St Illtud, rather than any of the pseudo-historical great rulers of south Wales, as occurs with St David being related to the eponymous ruler of Ceredigion and St Cadog being related to the eponymous rulers of Brycheiniog and Glywysing. This suggests that the writer felt no need to give the saint geographical connections or protections from any local rulers. The period that the *Life of St Illtud* was written in may be the reason for this. The Life was written in the mid to late twelfth century, after the Norman conquest of extensive parts of south Wales. The connections that were made between saints and local rulers, as in the cases of St David and St Cadog, were important to ensure the freedoms and protections of the saints’ foundations.¹⁵ When the Life was written, Llanilltud Fawr had been granted to Tewkesbury by Robert Fitzhamo and was therefore under the protection of Tewkesbury and did not need any protections from local rulers. This can be seen as a reflection of the way that Caradog of Llancarfan removed the episodes involving local rulers from his *Life of St Cadog*, but chose to leave in Arthur. Arthur was an internationally recognised figure who could still give legitimacy and status to the cult of St Illtud.

In the *Life of St Illtud* the saint is described as having a wife, Trinihid. There are no references to St Illtud having a wife in any sources prior to this. Doble suggested that the hagiographer may have been confused when trying to connect St Illtud to a dedication at

¹¹ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966), pp. 39, 41-5.

¹² B.F. Roberts, ‘*Culhwch ac Olwen*, The Triads, Saints Lives’ in R.Bromwich, A.O.H. Jarman & B.F. Roberts (eds.) *The Arthur of the Welsh* (Cardiff, 1991), p. 94, n. 31.

¹³ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 124.

¹⁴ Roberts, ‘*Culhwch ac Olwen*’, pp. 82-3.

¹⁵ W. Davies, ‘Property rights and property claims in Welsh “Vitae” of the eleventh century’ *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IV^e-XII^e siècles, Études Augustiniennes* (Paris, 1981), p. 522.

Llantrithyd. The site was connected to St Illtud, but he suggests that it is more likely to preserve the name of one of his disciples than a wife.¹⁶ The hagiographer used the presence of a wife to sermonise about the importance of celibacy in the church, a topic that had become popular in the twelfth century. It is unlikely that Trinihid was actually the wife of St Illtud, though the name may preserve that of one of his followers.

The absence of St Illtud from *Bonedd y Saint* or any other genealogies could reflect a decline in the cult of St Illtud. The absence of St Illtud from *Bonedd y Saint* could be seen as a suggestion that the cult was of such low status in the twelfth century that St Illtud was forgotten when it was compiled. However, it is clear that St Illtud had not been entirely forgotten in the twelfth century. The *Life of St Illtud* was written during this period which shows that Llanilltud Fawr was still promoting its saint. *The Life of St Illtud* was chosen to be part of the collection of Lives in *Vespasian A. XIV*, so was considered to be significant enough to collect. The *Margam Annals* describe a miracle attributed to him in 1185 at Llanrhidian, where milk came forth from a spring.¹⁷ It seems most likely that the reason the St Illtud did not appear in *Bonedd y Saint* was because his ancestry was never recorded and Llanilltud Fawr never had a reason to fabricate any family connections for the saint as many foundations did for their patron saints, due to the actual relationship the foundation held with the ruling dynasty of Glamorgan. The genealogies of saints like St Cadog and St David were created to give their principal foundations connections to powerful rulers, to ensure protections and privileges. As discussed below, Llanilltud Fawr did not need to fabricate a connection in this way, as it already had the protection and privileges that came from being the main church of the ruling dynasty of Glamorgan before the Norman Conquest, and the safety provided by Tewkesbury afterwards.

There are two Welsh rulers who appear in the *Life of St Illtud*. The first is Poulentus, king of Glamorgan. This is supposed to be Paul Penychen, the eponymous ruler of the cantref of Penychen, introduced in the *Life of St Cadog*. Paul himself features only briefly in the text as the master of St Illtud and is confined to the phase of St Illtud's life before he takes holy orders.¹⁸ He plays no part in St Illtud's monastic career, granting no privileges or land. He seems to have only been included because the connection between the saint and the ruler appeared in the recent *Life of St Cadog* and so could not be ignored by the hagiographer.¹⁹

¹⁶ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 131.

¹⁷ *Annales de Margan*, p. 18

¹⁸ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §2.

¹⁹ Lifris, §19.

King Meirchion, described as ‘king of the Glamorgan folk’ is the other ruler to feature in the *Life of St Illtud*. Meirchion is not a notable ruler, and seems to take the position of the typical tyrannical ruler to act as a foil to the saint, as appears in many different saints’ *Lives*.²⁰ Meirchion appears in three different parts of the *Life of St Illtud*. On the first occasion he offends the saint and is then visited by an angel who threatens Meirchion to make him confirm St Illtud’s rights to the land on which the monastery stands.²¹ On the second two occasions Meirchion’s stewards wrong St Illtud and are each struck down by God.²² This confirms the rights of Llanilltud Fawr and shows the power of St Illtud, standing as a warning to any who would cross the interests of Llanilltud Fawr. Although this type of confirmation is clearly no longer required in the period that the *Life* was written, the ideas of property rights were clearly so integral to Welsh hagiography that it was still included.²³

Beyond a brief connection with Paul Penychen and an unknown king Meirchion, the hagiographic material suggests no real connection between the cult of St Illtud and any kingdoms in south Wales. However, the epigraphic evidence shows that the cult of St Illtud and Llanilltud Fawr were closely linked to the ruling family of Gwent and Glywysing. There are three inscribed stone sculptures at Llanilltud Fawr that bear dedications to rulers of Glywysing. The first dates to around the late eighth century and erected for ‘the souls of King Iuthahel and of Artmail and Tecan.’ These are identified as Judhael, father of Fernmail who died in c. 775, and Arthuail another of his sons.²⁴ The second stone, the Houelt Cross, was erected in the mid to late ninth century by Hywel ap Rhys, king of Glywysing, in memory of his father Rhys. These rulers are all of the line of Meurig (Table 2) A third stone was erected by an unknown king Samson, probably in the early tenth century.²⁵ These stones suggest that there was some connection between the ruling family of Glywysing and Llanilltud Fawr, and that the monastery may have been the designated burial site of these local rulers. Llanilltud Fawr lay only three miles away from Llysworney, which was the site of the *llys* court of Gwrynydd, which would explain the connection between the monastery and the local ruling dynasty.²⁶ This patronage may be the reason that the Llanilltud Fawr had felt no need to

²⁰ Davies, ‘Property rights’, p. 523; Roberts, ‘*Culhwch ac Olwen*’, p. 82.

²¹ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§8-10.

²² *Ibid.*, §§17, 20.

²³ Davies, ‘Property rights’, p. 523.

²⁴ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 40; M. Redknap & J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales* Vol I (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 379-82.

²⁵ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 369-73, 386-89.

²⁶ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp.125, 601; J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 14; J. Knight, ‘Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg’, in H.N. Savory (ed.) *Glamorgan County History II* (Cardiff, 1984), p. 365.

fabricate any familial connections with other rulers and kingdoms for St Illtud: a long record of genuine patronage negated the need to create a sense of obligation for local rulers through invented early connections and gave Llanilltud Fawr all the legitimacy it required.

While ties to ruling dynasties may have been absent in the hagiographical material, links with other saints who were contemporary with St Illtud were not. As already described above, St Illtud appeared in several different saints Lives and several saints appear in St Illtud's own Life. St Illtud appears in all three of the *Lives of St Samson*, in the seventh, ninth and twelfth centuries respectively. He also appears in the ninth-century *Life of Paul Aurélian* and the eleventh-century *Life of St Gildas*. The ninth-century *Life of St Maglorius* features St Illtud, as does the ninth-century *Life of St Brioc* and the *Life of St Leonorius*. St Illtud also appears in the eleventh-century *Life of St Cadog*. Several saints also appear in the *Life of St Illtud*. SS. Germanus, Dyfrig, Samson, Paul, Gildas and Cadog all feature in the twelfth-century *Life of St Illtud*. Each of these saints had different relationships with St Illtud and as such their importance for the cult of St Illtud varied.

The connection between St Illtud and St Germanus can be confusing at times. St Germanus in this case does not refer to St Germanus of Auxerre who is prominent in British history for coming to Britain to expel the Pelagian heresy and who features in the *Historia Brittonum*. Rather, St Illtud is connected to St Germanus of Armorica, which has often caused some confusion.²⁷ Further, St Germanus does not have an obviously strong connection with St Illtud. St Germanus does not appear at any point in the *Life of St Illtud*. However, St Germanus does appear in connection to St Illtud in the seventh-century *Life of St Samson*. In this early piece of hagiography St Illtud is described as 'a disciple of St Germanus, and St Germanus himself had ordained him priest in his youth'.²⁸ Later in the same *Life*, St Samson is made abbot of a monastery that was said to have been founded by St Germanus, which is assumed to be Llanilltud Fawr.²⁹ The idea that St Illtud was taught by St Germanus of Armorica is repeated in the ninth-century *Life of St Brioc*, in which St Brioc, St Illtud and St Patrick all appear as pupils of St Germanus.³⁰ This suggests that in the earliest centuries of the cult of St Illtud, Germanus was seen as an important figure, adding legitimacy to the saint. It would be easy to suggest that St Germanus was less important in the twelfth century which was why he was not included in the *Life of St Illtud* which was written at that time, but

²⁷ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 304.

²⁸ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, §41-2.

³⁰ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. I (London, 1907), p. 292.

it ignores the fact that St Germanus is included in the *Life of St Samson* which appears in the *Book of Llandaf*. In this Life, St Illtud is once again described as a disciple of St Germanus and Llanilltud Fawr is described as being founded by St Germanus.³¹ The Life closely follows the first *Life of St Samson*, which would explain the inclusion of St Germanus as St Illtud's teacher, but does raise the question of why he is not named in the *Life of St Illtud*, which was written in the same period. It may suggest that the author of the *Life of St Illtud* had not read first *Life of St Samson* itself, only later texts based on it.

St Dyfrig is another saint connected to St Illtud. St Dyfrig was considered to be an important saint with a high status in Wales. He came from a generation before the majority of the well-known Welsh saints like St David, St Cadog and St Illtud, which afforded him a position as the father of the church in early medieval Wales.³² Many Welsh saints find some way to be connected to St Dyfrig, so it is unsurprising that St Illtud is also connected to him. The two saints appear together in the *Life of St Samson*. On two separate occasions St Dyfrig visits the monastery of St Illtud. While there he ordains St Samson, first as a deacon and then as a priest.³³ This early piece of hagiography suggests that St Dyfrig often visited St Illtud and portrays St Dyfrig in a role with some superiority over St Illtud, as it is St Dyfrig who is responsible for ordaining those at the monastery. In the *Life of St Illtud* St Dyfrig takes on a more direct role in St Illtud's religious life. In this later piece of hagiography St Dyfrig becomes the one to ordain St Illtud and the one who founds Llanilltud Fawr.³⁴ In one of the charters to St Dyfrig in the *Book of Llandaf* St Dyfrig places St Illtud at Llanilltud Fawr as its abbot.³⁵ In this way St Dyfrig has replaced St Germanus in the narrative: St Illtud has gone from being the disciple of St Germanus and ordained by him to having been ordained by St Dyfrig; and Llanilltud Fawr has gone from the monastery founded by St Germanus to being marked out by St Dyfrig and St Illtud placed there at his request. This seems like an attempt to suggest that St Illtud was connected to Llandaf, and that Llanilltud Fawr was subject to Llandaf.³⁶

The relationship between St Illtud and St Cadog is questionable. None of the early hagiography suggests any connection between the two saints. The first suggestion of a

³¹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Samsonis*, pp. 291, 298.

³² For further details on St Dyfrig see Chapter 4. The Cult of St Dyfrig.

³³ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§13, 15.

³⁴ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §7.

³⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, p. 313.

³⁶ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 14.

connection between them appears in the eleventh-century *Life of St Cadog*. In an episode of this *Life St Illtud* is a soldier of Paul Penychen's. Some of Illtud's men demand food from St Cadog and are subsequently swallowed up by the earth.³⁷ Paul Penychen does not appear in connection with St Illtud in any of the early hagiography before this episode. It has been suggested that St Illtud became a soldier in this period due to the fact that the area of Llanilltud Fawr had become a military fief which may have influenced the perceptions of the saint.³⁸ Baring-Gould and Fisher have suggested that Lifris made a mistake with this episode, confusing an episode between St Cadog and the soldiers of Sawyl Benuchel, who are swallowed up by the earth, and another episode where the soldiers with St Illtud are swallowed up by the earth while St Illtud is spared. In this way Lifris created one episode between St Cadog and Sawyl Benuchel and mistakenly took St Illtud's incident and put it in the same context with St Cadog.³⁹ The *Life of St Illtud* then copies the episode but downgrades the role of St Cadog. This suggests that there was no real connection between the two saints, though there was clearly an early connection between the foundations of Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr, as discussed in the previous chapter.

The relationship between St Illtud and St David is similarly confusing. St Illtud does not appear in the *Life of St David*. However, the Breton *Life of St Paul Aurélian* names St David as one of the pupils of St Illtud, as does the later *Life of St Illtud*.⁴⁰ The situation is further confused by the fact that the *Life of St David* says that he was actually the pupil of St Paul.⁴¹ It is possible that St David was included in the list of pupils of St Illtud in the *Life of St Paul Aurélian* as he was a prominent Welsh saint chosen by the hagiographer to increase the status of St Paul by placing him alongside other great saints from the beginning of his ecclesiastical career. However, St David being the pupil of St Paul would have given the saint much higher status than simply being a pupil alongside him. It seems likely that there was a relationship between St Paul and St David, but whether they were students together or teacher and student is unclear. The hagiography suggests that it is more likely that St David was a pupil of St Illtud with St Paul. In the *Life of St Paul Aurélian* there are four saints listed as outshining all the others: St Paul, St David, St Samson and St Gildas.⁴² St Paul, St Samson and St Gildas are noted as being recognised pupils of St Illtud, as discussed below. It seems unlikely that

³⁷ Lifris, §19.

³⁸ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 103.

³⁹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 306.

⁴⁰ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §11; *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §3.

⁴¹ *Vita Sancti David*, §10.

⁴² *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §3.

Wrmonoc would have chosen three pupils of St Illtud and then included St David if he were not. The fact that the *Life of St David* does not include St Illtud as his teacher may be because the tradition had faded in the two centuries between the two Lives, or because the cult of St David did not want to associate itself with the cult of St Illtud.

The last three prominent saints who are connected to St Illtud are the other disciples named in the hagiography: St Samson, St Paul and St Gildas. St Samson is a Breton saint of the sixth century who had his principal dedication at Dol. The *Life of St Samson* gives the earliest description of St Illtud. He appears as a wise old teacher to St Samson. A detailed description of him is given at his first appearance:

Now this Eltut was a disciple of St Germanus, and St Germanus himself had ordained him priest in his youth. And in truth Eltut was of all the Britons the most accomplished in all the Scriptures, namely of the Old and New Testaments, and in those of philosophy of every kind, of geometry namely, and of rhetoric, grammar, arithmetic and of all the theories of philosophy. And by birth he was a most wise magician, having knowledge of the future.⁴³

Flattering descriptions of the teacher of a saint appear in many saints' Lives. Usually, the greatness of the teacher is highlighted to then further promote the even greater status of the saint when they surpass the teacher. This does not occur in the *Life of St Samson*. Instead, St Samson leaves St Illtud because he wants to go to the monastery of St Peiro to live more aesthetically.⁴⁴ This suggests that the description of St Illtud was not just included to make St Samson look good. It may reflect a genuine view of St Illtud in Brittany in the seventh century. The author of the *Life of St Samson* claimed to have been to Britain to a monastery of St Samson, so might have heard stories about St Illtud there.⁴⁵ This portrayal of St Illtud is very different to that found in the *Life of St Illtud*.

There are no cross overs between the *Life of St Samson* and the *Life of St Illtud*. In the *Life of St Samson*, there are several chapters where St Samson is at the monastery of St Illtud and therefore many episodes that include St Illtud. None of these episodes are found in the *Life of St Illtud*. In fact, there are several discrepancies between the two Lives. The *Life of St Samson* includes a description of the death of St Illtud and how he had foretold it so that two other

⁴³ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, §13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, §2.

abbots could come to be with him. St Samson is summoned to a synod and made abbot of St Illtud's monastery upon his death.⁴⁶ In the *Life of St Illtud*, St Illtud goes to Dol and dies there.⁴⁷ These two portrayals are very different and incompatible: if St Illtud died before St Samson went to Brittany and founded Dol, he could not have died at Dol. In the *Life of St Illtud*, it is St Samson who dies first rather than St Illtud.⁴⁸ It suggests that whoever wrote the *Life of St Illtud* did not have a copy of the *Life of St Samson* to refer to.⁴⁹ This calls into question the relationship between Llanilltud Fawr and Dol in the twelfth century. *The Life of St Illtud* still includes St Samson as a disciple of St Illtud and gives Dol a prominent place as the burial site of the saint. However, the fact that the author did not have access to a copy of the *Life of St Samson* suggests a lack of exchange between the two sites in the twelfth century.

St Paul Aurélian was also a Breton saint. The *Life of St Paul Aurélian* was written by Wrmonoc of Landévennec in 884. The first six chapters of the hagiography describe the time that St Paul spent with St Illtud. St Paul appears as one of the brightest pupils of St Illtud, along with St David, St Samson and St Gildas.⁵⁰ Unlike St Samson, St Paul has sites dedicated to him in Wales. Llangors is dedicated to St Paul, which is the neighbouring parish to Llanhamlach which has a dedication to St Illtud.⁵¹ The same adjacency can be seen in the cults of both saints in Brittany. In Léon the cult of St Illtud is closely associated with that of St Paul where the parish of Lanildut lies next to that of Lampaul-Plourazel.⁵² This suggests that there was a sustained relationship between the foundations of the two saints.

St Gildas was another of St Illtud's disciples. St Gildas is best known as the historian who wrote *De Excidio Britanniae*. The first *Life of St Gildas* was written in the eleventh century by an anonymous monk of Rhuys in Brittany. Again, St Gildas appears as one of the brightest pupils of St Illtud, along with St Samson and St Paul.⁵³ There are two episodes that appear in each of the Lives of St Paul, St Gildas and St Illtud. In all three Lives there is an episode about the sea being pushed back by St Illtud and an episode about some birds who are driven

⁴⁶ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§8, 41-2.

⁴⁷ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §24.

⁴⁸ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §15.

⁴⁹ Further supporting the idea that Caradog of Llancarfan could not have written both the *Life of St Illtud* and the *Book of Llandaf*, as the *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Samsonis* does include references to *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, suggesting that whoever composed the *Book of Llandaf* did have access to a copy of the text.

⁵⁰ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §§1-6.

⁵¹ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1956), pp. 41-43.

⁵² Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 99.

⁵³ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §§3-6.

away to stop them eating the grain.⁵⁴ It suggests that all three of these Lives may have been based on a lost Life that contained these two episodes. This would be similar to the way that the episode about some beasts who were pulling some wood appears in the Irish *Life of St Finnian* and is then copied into the Lives of St David and St Cadog who are associated with this episode.⁵⁵

The hagiography suggests that there was not just a relationship between St Illtud and each individual saint, but that St Illtud, St Paul and St Gildas were all connected. This connection was clearly well known in Brittany as they all appear in the Lives of both St Gildas and St Paul: each Life features St Illtud as the wise teacher and lists the others as fellow disciples of St Illtud.⁵⁶ There was clearly a well known relationship between St Illtud and his disciples, St Samson, St Gildas and St Paul, seen in the hagiography. The absence of St Samson from the *Life of St Gildas* may suggest that the relationship between Dol and the foundations of the other saints had declined. The topographical evidence suggests that there may have been a closer relationship between the cults of St Illtud and St Paul. It is clear that St Illtud was an important figure in Brittany during the early Middle Ages as he appears as a legitimising figure to these Breton saints. This can further be seen by his presence in several ninth-century Breton Lives: the *Life of St Maglorius* features St Illtud, as does the *Life of St Brioc* and the *Life of St Leonorius*.⁵⁷ It suggests that at least between the seventh and eleventh centuries St Illtud was seen as an important saint in Brittany as well as in Wales and may indicate links between Llanilltud Fawr and a number of Breton foundations.

The Cult of St Illtud in the Landscape

St Illtud has a very marked presence in the landscape of south Wales. Unusually, there are very few ties to the landscape found in the *Life of St Illtud* but he is found across south Wales in a number of quite complex cult landscapes. His presence in the landscape is not only in a number of sites dedicated to him and inscribed stones associated with his foundations, but

⁵⁴ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §§4, 5; *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §§13, 14; *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §§3, 4.

⁵⁵ Lifris, §14; *Vita Sancti David*, §35; *Vita Sancti Finnian*, 2529-2561; E.R. Henken, *The Welsh Saints: A Study in Patterned Lives* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 83.

⁵⁶ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §3; *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §11; *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §3.

⁵⁷ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. I, p. 292.; Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, pp. 342-4, 407

also in the toponyms of several wells, streams and stone monuments, suggesting that his cult was deeply rooted in the landscape.

Llanilltud Fawr was the principal monastery of the cult of St Illtud. The site is located on the south coast of Glamorgan. A mile north-west of the site lies the remains of a Roman villa where several burials have been found. Llanilltud Fawr has been compared to Llandough, where there is a similar situation. However, the burials at Llanilltud Fawr are considered to be contemporary with the early monastery and not an indication of continued occupation of the site in the sub-roman period.⁵⁸ Llanilltud Fawr also lies close to the *llys* court of Llysworney. There is evidence, discussed above, that suggests that Llanilltud Fawr acted as a religious site to the ruling dynasty at Llysworney during the ninth and tenth centuries, with the monastery taking on the role of royal cemetery in the period.⁵⁹ This would have made Llanilltud Fawr an important and powerful monastic institution during this period, with powerful patronage. The origins of Llanilltud Fawr are obscure. The earliest mention of the site is in *Vita I Samsonis* which says that the site was founded by St Germanus.⁶⁰ The *Life of St Illtud* describes the foundation of the monastery in great detail: the site is suggested to St Illtud by an angel and is then marked out and consecrated by St Dyfrig.⁶¹ It is possible that it is described in this way in the *Life of St Illtud* because in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* it is St Dyfrig that places St Illtud at Llanilltud Fawr.⁶² The author of the *Life of St Illtud* was following what the previous hagiography had said about Llanilltud Fawr, but modifies it so that the site is chosen by an heavenly message given to St Illtud, rather than being the sole production of St Dyfrig. In this way Llanilltud Fawr is able to show that the foundation was not rightfully the property of Llandaf as the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* implies. The fact that an angel suggests the site of the monastery is markedly different to the way saints' foundations are marked out in many other saints' Lives. Often the site is marked by the appearance of a special animal, often a white sow or boar, or an animal with a special marking, as in the cases of St Dyfrig and St Cadog.⁶³ It is uncertain to what extent the connection to St Germanus is correct. It is certainly true that St Germanus did found several

⁵⁸ Knight, *South Wales*, pp. 38-9.

⁵⁹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 125, 601; J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 385; Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 14; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 40; Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones* pp. 369-89, 575.

⁶⁰ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §41.

⁶¹ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §7.

⁶² *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, p. 313.

⁶³ Henken, *The Welsh Saints*, pp. 88-9.

sites in Britain. *Vita I Samsonis* was written in the late seventh century or early eighth century but the author implies that they based some of the information on an earlier *Life of St Illtud*.⁶⁴ If this were the case, then the reference to the monastery being founded by St Germanus may preserve an early medieval connection between the site and St Germanus.

The *Life of St Illtud* is unusual in that it does not mention any other monastic or religious sites or claim any properties. This theme was a common feature of early hagiography, seen very clearly in all the other Lives examined in this thesis, but is overtly absent here. This is most likely because of the fact that the *Life of St Illtud* was written several decades after the Norman conquest of Glamorgan, when it had already become the property of Tewkesbury Cathedral. The hagiographer would not have felt the need to include properties that belonged to the cult of St Illtud because when he was writing those properties would have no longer belonged to Llanilltud Fawr. In the same way that claiming guarantees and protections of rulers had become obsolete, the claiming of properties had also lost its purpose in the *Life of St Illtud*. There are only three places named in the *Life of St Illtud*. The first of these is Hodnant valley, the site for St Illtud's monastery. The second is a cave on the Ewenny River that St Illtud retreats to. This site may have been the origins of Ewenny Priory. The third is Llwynarth, another cave to which St Illtud retreats.⁶⁵ This last site is taken from an episode that appears in the *Historia Brittonum*. In it the body of a holy man with an altar floating above him is brought to St Illtud while he is at his cave. St Illtud buried the saint in the cave and the altar floated over the site where the saint then built a church.⁶⁶ The site has been identified as a site at Oystermouth, possibly Minchin Hole.⁶⁷ The site is clearly important to the hagiographer as a cult site of St Illtud. The site here is not mentioned in order to claim it for the cult of St Illtud, rather just because it is an important episode linked to the saint. Doble suggested that there are two further sites referenced in the *Life of St Illtud*: Llanharry and Llantrithyd. At Llanharry are two standing stones which he suggested were the two robbers that were turned to stone.⁶⁸ This connection seems doubtful at best, as there is no evidence to link the two. He also suggested that Llantrithyd may be the site described as the place where Illtud's wife, Trinihid, had her oratory in the hills. The site preserves her name and explains

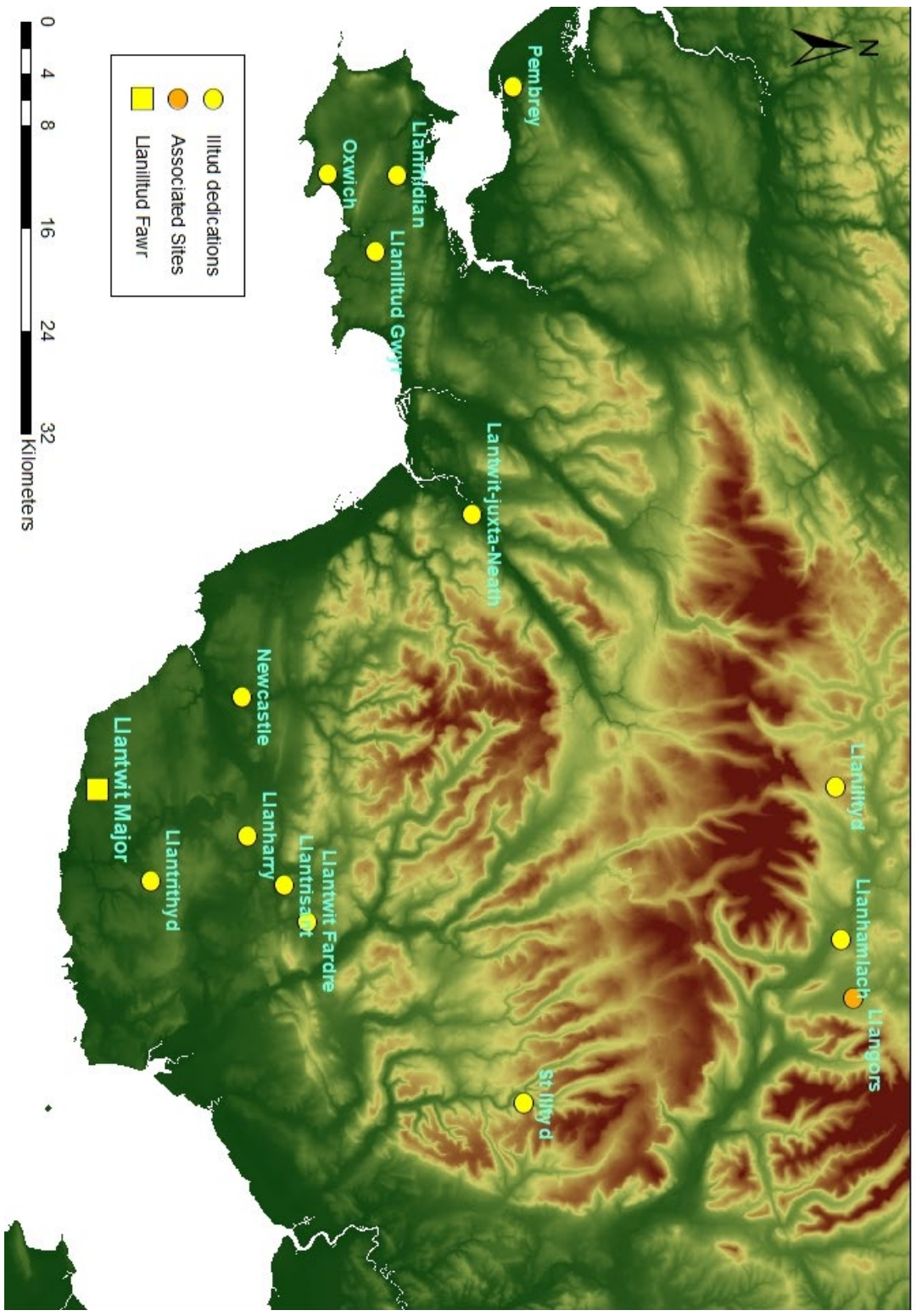
⁶⁴ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§7-8; Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 382.

⁶⁵ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§4, 18, 21.

⁶⁶ *Historia Brittonum*, §71.

⁶⁷ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 115; A. Evans, 'The Levitating Altar of St Illtud', *Folklore* 122.1 (2011), p. 64; Knight, *South Wales*, p. 40

⁶⁸ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 116; L.V. Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 130 (1981), p. 137.



Map 6 Sites dedicated to St Illtud or associated with the cult of St Illtud in south Wales

why the site is dedicated to St Illtud, though as discussed above, is more likely to be the name of a forgotten disciple of St Illtud than his wife.⁶⁹

There are several sites dedicated to St Illtud in south Wales. There are fourteen sites dedicated to St Illtud, mostly found in south-east Wales, in areas of Glamorgan. In Glamorgan are Llanilltud Gwyr, Llanharry, Llantrisant, Llanrhidian, Llantrithyd, Lantwit-juxta-Neath, Llanilltud Fawr, Llantwit Faerdre, Newcastle and Oxwich. In Merionethshire lies Llanelltyd. There are two dedications in Breconshire at Llanhamlach and Llanilltyf. The last dedication is found at Pembrey in Carmarthenshire. In Monmouthshire there is a dedication at St Illyd, Llanhilleth.⁷⁰ There is another site commonly attributed to St Illtud at Llantoed in Carmarthenshire. However, Llantoed is a name that has mutated from its original name and is not associated with St Illtud. The majority of these sites are listed in the 1254 *Valuation of Norwich* or the 1291 *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*: Llanilltud Fawr, Llanharry, Llantrisant and Llantrithyd are all recorded in the *Valuation of Norwich*;⁷¹ Llantwit Faerdre, Newcastle, Oxwich, Llanrhidian, Pembrey, Llanhamlach and Devynock all appear in the *Taxatio*.⁷² The first mention of Llanelltyd, Merionethshire was in 1269.⁷³ This dedication is outside of the main areas of the cult of St Illtud, so may represent a later dedication to the saint. St Illyd at Llanhilleth is not recorded until 1559, when it appears in the Calendar of Patent Rolls.⁷⁴ Similarly, the first record of Lantwit-juxta-Neath is not until the end of the seventeenth century.⁷⁵ However, there are two inscribed stones at Lantwit-juxta-Neath, one dated from the seventh to ninth centuries and the other dated from the tenth to eleventh centuries.⁷⁶ This suggests that there was a significant foundation at the site during the early medieval period, that can be assumed to be Lantwit-juxta-Neath. Presumably, the fact that the site is absent from both the taxation records means that by the thirteenth century the site had declined or already been abandoned.

⁶⁹ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §16; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 131.

⁷⁰ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 315; Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, pp. 41-3; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 138-42; R. Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints or the Primitive Christians usually considered to have been the Founders of Churches in Wales* (London, 1836), pp. 325-44; A.W. Wade-Evans, *Parochiale Wallicanum* (Stow-on-the-Wold, 1911), pp. 16, 29, 33-6, 46-7, 50-51, 76.

⁷¹ *The Valuation of Norwich*, pp. 314-16, 324.

⁷² *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*, pp. 272-3, 278-9.

⁷³ H.W. Owen & R. Morgan, *Dictionary of the Place Names of Wales* (Llandysul, 2007), p. 239.

⁷⁴ S.R. Neal & C. Leighton (eds.) *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 43 Elizabeth I (1600-1601): C 66/1548-1569* (Kew, 2011), p. 202.

⁷⁵ E. Lhuyd & R.H. Morris, *Parochialia: Being a Summary of Answers to "Parochial Queries in Order to a Geographical Dictionary, etc., of Wales"* (London, 1911), p. 123.

⁷⁶ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p. 368.

These dedications are all shown on Map 6. As can be seen, the dedications are mostly found in lowland areas of south Glamorgan and around the Gower, many of which are coastal in nature, with two outlying sites further north in Breconshire. Bowen has suggested that the cult spread along the southern routeway, heading west from Llanilltud Fawr and along the northern roads inland. He also draws attention to the fact that Llanilltud Fawr is near to a Roman villa and that Llanilltyd is located on the mountainside above the Roman road.⁷⁷ However, there is no evidence of Roman continuity between the villa site and Llanilltud Fawr. There were burials found at the villa, but they have been dated to the early medieval period and are not seen as evidence of sub-Roman occupation.⁷⁸ The location of Llanilltyd suggests more that it was sited near to the major routeway through the Usk valley, rather than being deliberately placed in a Roman context. Bowen also suggested that the St Illtud dedications mirror those of St Cadog, and in many ways they do: there is a large group of them in south Glamorgan, a few around the Gower and a couple in the Brecon mountains.⁷⁹ However, there are far more St Cadog dedications and they have a much broader distribution, with several sites in east Glamorgan. The St Cadog dedications also seem to be more spread out, while those to St Illtud appear to be concentrated in quite close groups. There are three main groups of dedications: one around the lowland area of south Glamorgan; the second in and around the Gower; and the third in Breconshire. These groups seem to be largely distinct from each other, suggesting that there may have been three separate parts to the cult of St Illtud, which may have had links but may have been largely independent of each other. Llanhamlach and Llanilltyd especially seem to be quite distanced from the main southern, lowland St Illtud sites.

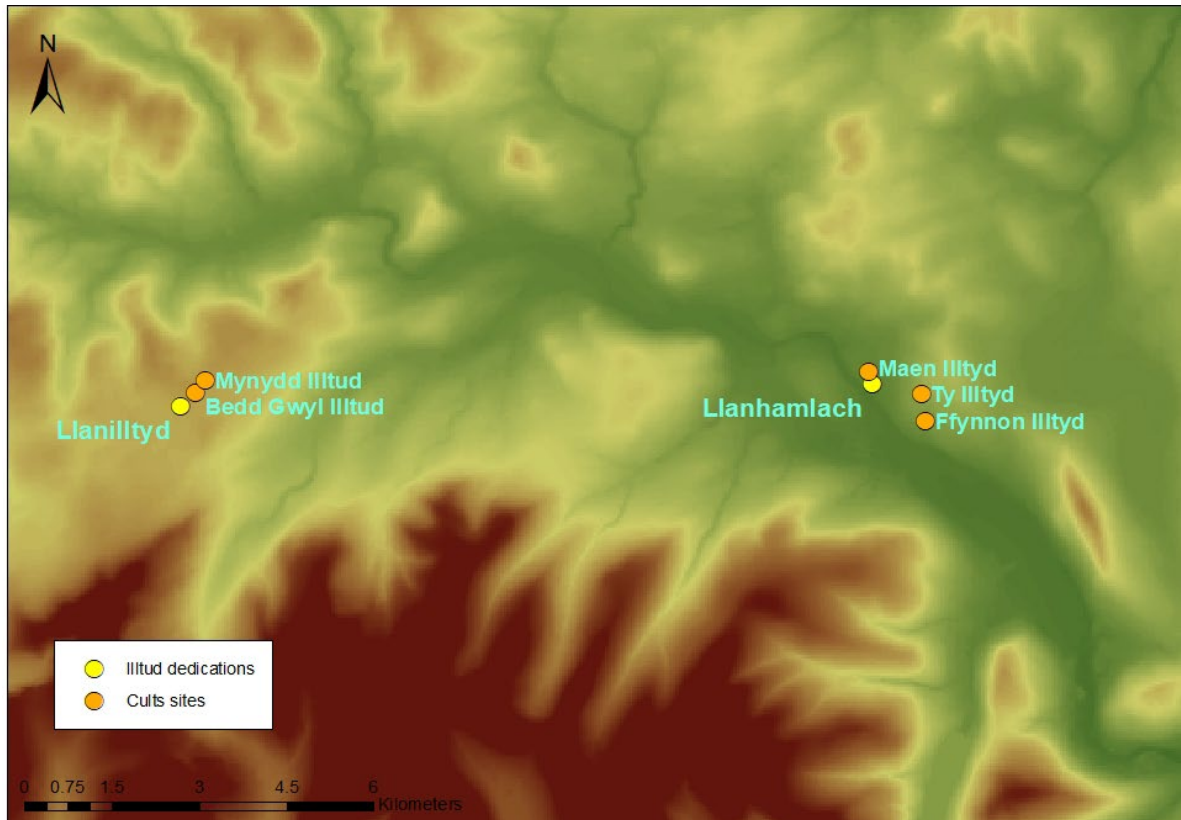
There are several sites in the landscape of south Wales that are related to St Illtud. Heather James highlights the importance of these types of sites for the cult of a saint, stating ‘sacred places and associations with the natural landscape were a dynamic source of folklore and focus of pilgrimage’.⁸⁰ There are two concentrations of these sites in Breconshire which create two cult landscapes, shown on Map 7. The first three of these are in the area of the church of Llanhamlach. North of Manest Court Farm there lies a chambered cairn called Tŷ Illtud. It is the only chambered cairn in Wales that is known to be dedicated to a saint,

⁷⁷ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, p. 41.

⁷⁸ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 39.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 41

⁸⁰ James, H., ‘The geography of the cult of St David: a study of dedication patterns in the medieval diocese’ in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 43, 49.



Map 7 Sites associated with St Illtud around Llanhamlach and Llanilltyd

suggesting that it played an important role in the cult of St Illtud. The first mention of the site was in the seventeenth century.⁸¹ This means there is no evidence that the cairn was named after St Illtud in the early medieval period, but it seems unlikely to have been named thus after the decline of the cult of St Illtud. The site is claimed to have been the cell of St Illtud, but this is clearly a local tradition as it would be unlikely for anyone to have lived in such a small space.⁸² Close to the cairn was a standing stone called Maen Illtud which was removed in the late seventeenth century. There is also a local spring known as Ffynnon Illtud.⁸³ The cairn, standing stone and spring all lie within a mile radius of Llanhamlach, suggesting that the area had a quite complex cult presence centred on the church there. There is a similar cult landscape found in the area of Llanilltyd. Here there is a Bronze Age cairn called Bedd Gŵyl

⁸¹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, pp. 315-6; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 139; Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud', pp. 131, 135; E.R. Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 113.

⁸² Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud', p. 135; Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints*, p. 113.

⁸³ Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud', p. 135.

Illtud, ‘the grave of St Illtud’s eve’. There is a local tradition that this is where the saint was buried.⁸⁴ Bedd Gŵyl Illtud is located near to a hill called Mynydd Illtud.⁸⁵ The chapel, cairn

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 135; Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, pp. 315; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 140; Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints*, p. 113.

⁸⁵ Grinsell, ‘The Later History of Tŷ Illtud’, p. 135.

and hill form a second local cult landscape. Both areas correspond with the outlying northern dedications in Breconshire. This suggests that there was a major outlying cult to St Illtud located in the area that was separate from the main body of the cult of St Illtud centred on Llanilltud Fawr. The different aspects in the landscape also suggest that it may have been part of a pilgrim landscape, in much the same way as the areas around St Davids.

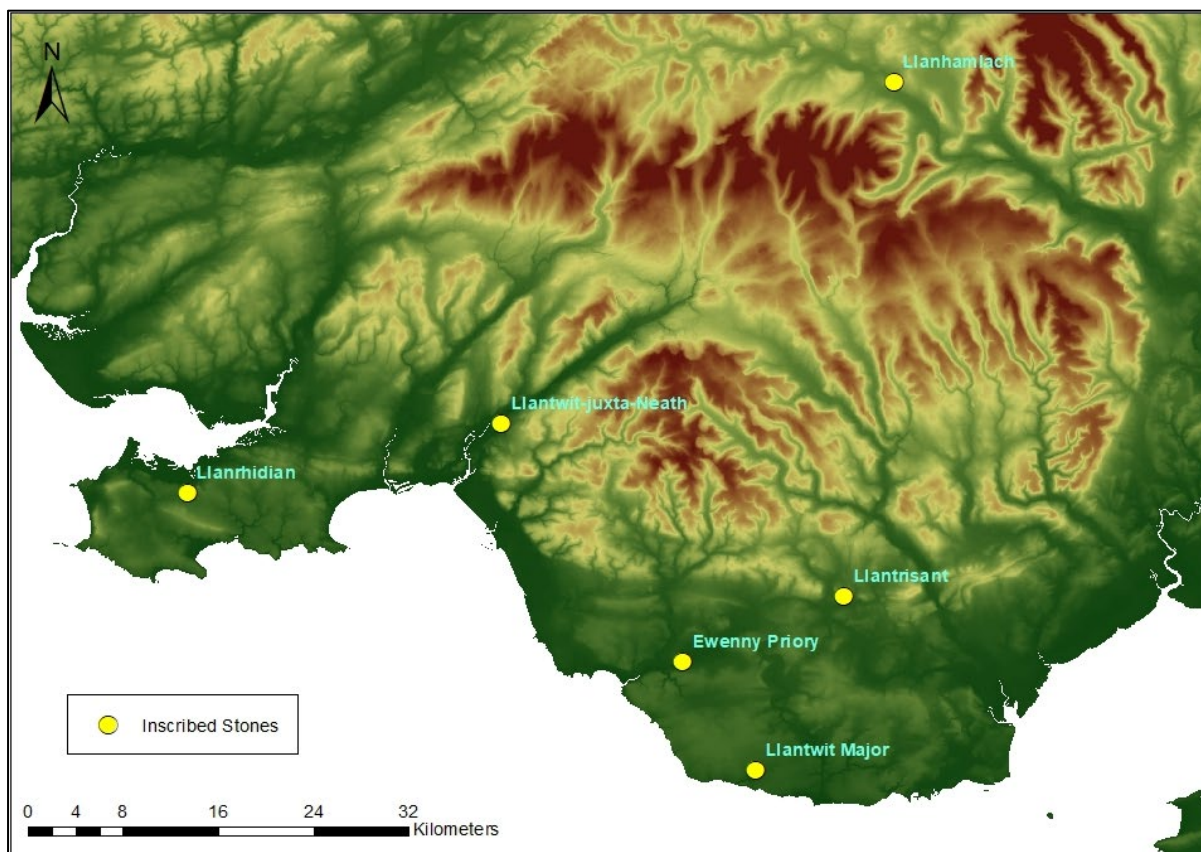
St Illtud is associated with several springs and wells in south Wales. One spring, Ffynnon Illtud in Llanhamlach, has already been mentioned above. There is another Ffynnon Illtud near to the well of St Gwynno at Llanwono near Pontypridd.⁸⁶ Another well named after St Illtud at Llanrhidian is also named Ffynnon Illtud. There is evidence that there was a well dedicated to St Illtud at the site in the twelfth century as it is mentioned in the *Annals of Margam* in 1185 as having poured forth milk.⁸⁷ Baring-Gould and Fisher also note the presence of Illtud's Brook near Neath.⁸⁸ These wells and springs, together with the cult landscapes and caves described above all suggest that the cult of St Illtud was closely tied to the surrounding landscape. It does indicate that while there may only be a few dedications to the saint, St Illtud was still very much central to communities and their local landscapes. It may be that local worship of the saint was much more concentrated on natural places than on chapels or monasteries, reflecting a different side of the cult of St Illtud.

There are a number of inscribed standing stones found at sites dedicated to St Illtud. There are twenty-five stones found at six of the St Illtud dedications. There are a large number of highly ornate stone sculptures at Llanilltud Fawr, which is to be expected as it was the principal St Illtud site. There are nine stones at Llanilltud Fawr: a cross shaft with a long Latin inscription from the late eighth century; a disc headed pillar cross, the Houelt Cross, with a Latin inscription from the mid to late ninth century; an intricately carved cross shaft from the late ninth century; the Samson cross with a Latin inscription from the early tenth century; a carved pillar from the tenth or eleventh centuries; two fragments from stones dated to the tenth to eleventh centuries; and two fragments dated to the eleventh to twelfth

⁸⁶ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 316; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 138; Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud', p. 136.

⁸⁷ *Annales de Margan*, p. 18; Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 316; Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, p. 43; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 140; Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints*, p. 114.

⁸⁸ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 316.



Map 8 Inscribed stones found at sites dedicated to St Illtud

centuries.⁸⁹ There are also nine stones found at Ewenny Priory, though these are not as intricately carved as those at Llanilltud Fawr. There is a cross carved grave marker from the eighth to ninth centuries; another cross carved grave marker and a cross slab that belong to the tenth to eleventh centuries; a cross carved grave marker from the eleventh century; two cross carved grave markers and a fragment with detailed interlace on it that are dated to the eleventh to twelfth centuries; and two cross carved grave markers from the twelfth century.⁹⁰ At Llantrisant there is a single cross carved slab dated to sometime between the seventh to ninth centuries.⁹¹ There are two stones found at Llantwit-juxta-Neath. One is an earlier carved ring cross from the seventh to ninth centuries and the second is a rough cross slab from the late tenth century to the eleventh century.⁹² There are also two stones found at Llanhamlach. One is a fragment with intricate plaitwork and the other is a cross carved stone with pecked figural designs and an inscription, both dating from the tenth to eleventh century.⁹³ The final two stones are found at Llanrhidian. One of the stones is lost but probably dated to the early

⁸⁹ M. Redknap & J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 369-396.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 214-301.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 366-7.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 368.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 210-14.

sixth century, and the second is a slab with incised patterns from the ninth to tenth centuries.⁹⁴

The inscribed stones at St Illtud sites were erected right across the early medieval period. The earliest stone is the sixth-century stone from Llanrhidian. There are two stones from the seventh to ninth centuries, one at Llantrisant and one at Lantwit-juxta-Neath. As this is the only stone at Llantrisant it suggests that the site may have had some brief early significance in this period but little importance or patronage later on. The earliest stone at Llanilltud Fawr is from the late eighth century, with further stones being erected from the ninth through to the twelfth century, possibly reflecting the period that Llanilltud Fawr received patronage from the dynasty of the ruling family of Glamorgan. The quality of the stone sculpture remained consistent throughout the period, suggesting that Llanilltud Fawr had powerful patronage throughout the period from the late eighth century to the twelfth century. Ewenny Priory boasts the same number of stones as Llanilltud Fawr but they are of a much lower quality. The inscribed stones at Ewenny are simple cross carved grave markers and only one stone shows any evidence of intricate carving. The stones are also largely late in date: one is from the eighth to ninth centuries and the rest date from the tenth to twelfth centuries. The number of stones does suggest that there was some importance to the site, but that that importance was quite late in the life of the cult of St Illtud. The two stones at Llanhamlach further support the idea that it was an area of cult significance. The stones are intricate suggesting that there was some recognition in the period of the site's importance. The date of the stones suggests that the area became important to the cult of St Illtud probably sometime in the tenth century. It is uncertain if it was at this point that the rest of the cult landscape was developed in the area or if the cult landscape was what encouraged patronage at the site.

The ninth to tenth centuries seems to mark the period when the power of the cult of St Illtud was at its highest: it is during this time that the most stones were erected across the different sites. The distribution of the stones can highlight the areas important to the cult of St Illtud. As can be seen in Map 8 the sites with inscribed stones lie in the centre of the three areas noted in the distribution of the dedications. The number of stones at Llanilltud Fawr, Ewenny Priory and Llantrisant suggest that this group in the south of Glamorgan was probably the most important area of St Illtud dedications in Wales. Llanrhidian is at the centre of the dedications around the Gower, and is also the site of a holy well, adding to its significance as

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 362-6.

a cult site. The stones at Llanhamlach, as already discussed, confirm the presence of an important cult landscape in the area of Breconshire. The fact that there are stones and significant sites in the landscape in all three of the noted groups of dedications suggests that there were three distinct areas in which the cult of St Illtud grew. The area in south Glamorgan was clearly the centre of the cult of St Illtud, with Llanilltud Fawr, the principal St Illtud foundation, at its centre and where the *llys* court of Llysworney was located, the source of powerful patronage that enabled the erection of a significant number of inscribed stones. The group of dedications in the Gower seems to have had some possible early significance as the stones at Llanrhidian date to the early part of the period. The group in Breconshire clearly correspond with the cult landscapes that appear in the area and gained popularity and patronage at the height of the cult of St Illtud in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Llanilltud Fawr is considered to be the principal foundation of the cult of St Illtud, but there is some evidence to suggest that it is not the site where St Illtud originally had his school. The earliest written sources for St Illtud and his school are the Breton Lives in which he appears. It is notable that none of them name Llanilltud Fawr as the site of St Illtud's monastery. The first appearance of the school of St Illtud is in the *Life of St Samson*. In this Life, St Samson attends the school and later becomes the abbot there.⁹⁵ However, the site is never named in the text. It seems unlikely that the location referred to as the school of St Illtud in the *Life of St Samson* was Llanilltud Fawr. In the Life the school is described as being 'not far from' the monastery of St Peiro, which is thought to be found on Caldey Island.⁹⁶ The author cannot be referring to Llanilltud Fawr in this situation, as the site is quite a distance from Caldey Island. This is something that Wooding was unable to find a reason for in his discussion.⁹⁷

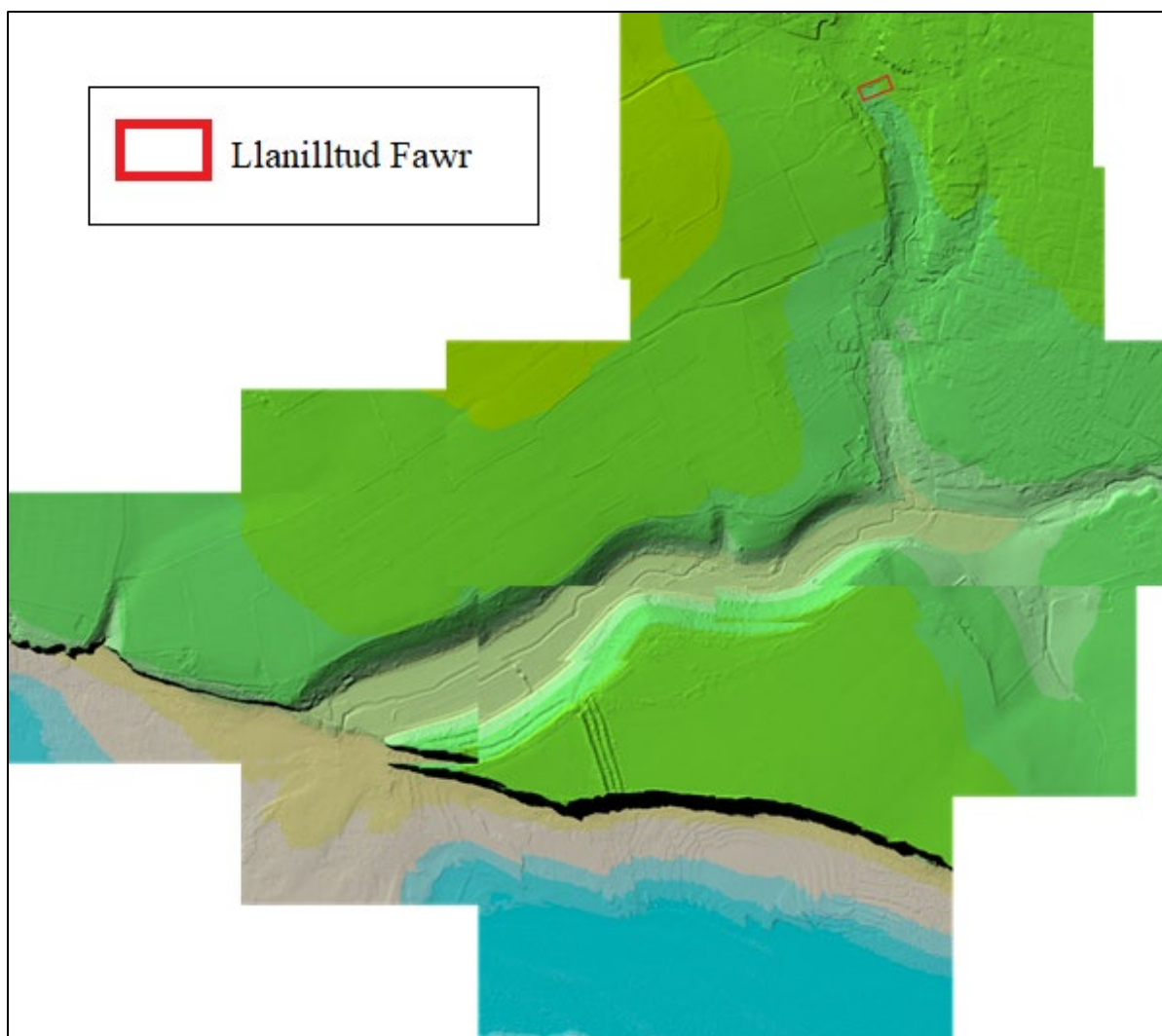
There are episodes found in three separate later Lives that suggest that Llanilltud Fawr cannot be the site originally considered to be the school of St Illtud. The first episode appears in the ninth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian*. In it St Paul and some other students ask St Illtud to push back the sea so that their space is not so limited. St Illtud then prays to God who makes the sea retreat.⁹⁸ In a similar episode, which appears in the eleventh-century *Life of St Gildas*, St Illtud prays to God to enlarge the island where they live so there would be more space. The

⁹⁵ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§7-21, 42.

⁹⁶ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §20.

⁹⁷ Wooding, 'The Representation of Early British Monasticism', p. 151.

⁹⁸ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §3.



Map 9 Lidar map of Llanilltud Fawr

sea is driven back and the land is increased.⁹⁹ This episode is repeated again in the *Life of St Illtud*, where the proximity of the sea causes problems. An episode describes how ‘he was troubled by the frequent inundation of the sea and a fluvial approach towards his cemetery’.¹⁰⁰ These three episodes suggest that the original foundation of St Illtud was very close to the sea. This would not seem to exclude Llanilltud Fawr as it is located on the south coast of Glamorgan and lies only 2.25km from the sea and lies next to a watercourse. However, the watercourse is only a brook, and lidar imaging shows that the brook was never much larger, and importantly it shows no sign of historic flooding (see Map 9). The site of the old monastic grange also lies about seventy metres above sea level. The lack of evidence of flooding and the height above sea level suggests that Llanilltud Fawr cannot be the place referred to in the two hagiographical episodes above. Parallels of this episode to the story of

⁹⁹ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §4.

¹⁰⁰ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §13.

Moses parting the waves could suggest that the episode was not supposed to reflect any real landscape, only act as a biblical motif. However, even if the authors of the two Lives were only using the episode to display their biblical knowledge, both of them clearly thought that the monastery of St Illtud was located beside the sea, or they would have had the saint drive back a river or some other body of water instead. This supports the theory that in Brittany at this time it was believed that St Illtud's school was on the coast or an island and not at Llanilltud Fawr.

These three hagiographical texts suggest that these episodes may refer to Caldey Island. Caldey is a small island off the coast of Tenby, in Pembrokeshire. Earlier in the *Life of St Paul Aurélian* St Illtud's school is described as being on an 'island called Pyrus' which was located in 'the country of the Demetae'.¹⁰¹ The 'island called Pyrus' here is understood to mean Ynys Bŷr, which is Caldey Island.¹⁰² The country of the Demetae was the later region of Dyfed, off which coast the island lies.¹⁰³ The *Life of St Gildas* also states that St Illtud lived on an island that was narrow and confined.¹⁰⁴ Both of these Lives are Breton, the first from the ninth century and the second from the eleventh century. It is clear that when these Lives were written it was believed in Brittany that St Illtud's school had been on Caldey Island. Jonathan Wooding argued that Wrmonoc had never been to Wales and so conflated the two monasteries of St Illtud and St Peiro which appear in the *Life of St Samson*.¹⁰⁵ While this could be a natural conclusion from the mention of an 'island called Pyrus', it does not explain the episodes mentioned above that describe how St Illtud made the sea retreat. The episode is not found in the *Life of St Samson*, so the authors would not have used it as a basis for writing this part of the text and so confused it with the naming of the 'island called Pyrus'.

The *Life of St Samson* may suggest that the school of St Illtud was located at Caldey Island. The description of St Peiro's monastery being 'not far from' the monastery of St Illtud would make sense if it referred to a monastery of St Illtud's that was on Caldey Island along with St Peiro's foundation. St Peiro was a follower of St Illtud and in a list of abbots found in a deed

¹⁰¹ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §2.

¹⁰² Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p.309; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 99.

¹⁰³ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ *Vita Sancti Gildae*, §§4, 5.

¹⁰⁵ J.M. Wooding, 'The Representation of Early British Monasticism and *Peregrinatio* in *Vita Prima S. Samsonis*', in L. Olsen (ed.), *St Samson of Dol and the earliest history of Brittany, Cornwall and Wales* (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 148.

in the *Book of Llandaf* ‘Piro’ is listed as the successor of St Illtud.¹⁰⁶ While the list of abbots may not be genuine, it may suggest that even in the twelfth century there was some perception of there being a connection between the two saints.

There is an inscribed stone on Caldey Island, found in the ruins of the Old Priory. The stone is broken at the top and has an incomplete ogham inscription which dates to the fifth century, and a Latin inscription and four Latin crosses which date from the eighth to early ninth century. The ogham reads ‘MAGL-DUBR....QI’.¹⁰⁷ Local opinion is that the inscription refers to a tonsured servant of St Dyfrig, but this interpretation is speculative.¹⁰⁸ There is a possibility that the inscription refers to St Illtud, who was tonsured by St Dyfrig, but it could also refer to many others, and as the interpretation is uncertain it cannot be seen as a real confirmation of any connection of the site to the saint. The presence of the stone is far more revealing than the inscription. The stone confirms that there was an important ecclesiastical presence on the site from at least the fifth century. Caldey Island was granted to Robert Fitzmartin in the early twelfth century and given to the Benedictine monks of St Dogmaels. A Tironian Priory was erected on the site in 1113 as a cell of St Dogmaels. As the inscribed stone was found at the priory, it would suggest that the priory was constructed on the site of an earlier monastery.¹⁰⁹ Apart from the inscribed stone, there are other medieval finds from Caldey Island. At the site of the medieval parish church, excavations showed evidence of Phocian Red Slipware from c.475-550 and E ware from the seventh century.¹¹⁰ This shows two distinct areas of activity on Caldey Island in the early medieval period: one around the Old Priory and one around the parish church.¹¹¹ There is a well at the site of the Old Priory, which could represent the well referred to in the *Life of St Samson* as the well that St Peiro fell into if St Peiro’s monastery was indeed located on the island.¹¹² The other site could be the site of St Illtud’s school. Until tidal changes in the nineteenth century there was a tidal inlet that came within 150m of the parish church site, which would match with the description of a site that had problems with tidal flooding.¹¹³ To the south and north-west of the church there have been discoveries of long-cist burials which may belong to the early

¹⁰⁶ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV (London, 1913), p. 89.

¹⁰⁷ N. Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales Vol II* (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 294-99.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 296-8; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 58-9.

¹⁰⁹ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p. 296.

¹¹⁰ E. Campbell, ‘New Finds of Post-Roman Imported Pottery and Glass from South Wales’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 138 (1989), p. 59.

¹¹¹ Campbell, ‘New Finds’, p. 61; Wooding, ‘The Representation of Early British Monasticism’, p. 150.

¹¹² *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §36.

¹¹³ Campbell, ‘New Finds’, p. 61

medieval period of activity in the area.¹¹⁴ This would also fit with the descriptions of St Illtud's school found in the hagiography.

Geographically, there is little to suggest any relationship between the cult of St Illtud and Caldey Island. The island lies much further west than any of the other St Illtud dedications. It would be unusual for the early school of a saint to be located so far away from any other dedications of the cult of that saint. The *Life of St Samson* also casts some doubt on whether the school of St Illtud could have been on Caldey Island. The Life introduces the monastery of St Peiro with a brief description: 'Now there was, not far from this monastery, a certain island recently inhabited by one, an eminent man and holy priest, Piro by name.'¹¹⁵ This description would on the surface discredit the idea of St Illtud's school being on Caldey Island as it says that St Peiro's monastery was on a separate island. However, there the word *insula* used here in the original Latin can also be taken to mean monastery, which makes the interpretation more complicated.¹¹⁶ The description could show that Caldey Island was a separate island close to the school of St Illtud or merely that it was a monastery close to it. As the translation is uncertain it means that, as with the other information, there is not enough evidence to confirm the argument for Caldey Island being the location of St Illtud's monastery.

Topographically, the only one of the existing dedications to St Illtud that is close enough to the coast to have had problems is the church of St Illtud at Oxwich, which lies right on the coast. Unfortunately, there is no written or archaeological evidence to suggest that it was the original foundation of St Illtud. From the extant sources Caldey Island is the site which most closely matches the descriptions for location for the school of St Illtud, though there is no definitive evidence for placing it there. While it is not geographically within the same areas as the main cult of St Illtud, it would not be exceptional for a saint to be associated with an island away from their main body of dedications; St Dyfrig was associated with Bardsey Island where he often stayed even though it is on the opposite side of Wales from his principal monastic dedication. Although the exact location of St Illtud's school is uncertain, it seems likely that it was not at Llanilltud Fawr and that the cult centre moved from its original site to there, in much the same way the cult of St Teilo moved from Llandeilo Fawr to Llandaf. The foundation at Llanilltud Fawr was much more secure and enjoyed the patronage

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 61.

¹¹⁵ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §20.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 26 n. 2.

of the local ruling dynasty which would have elevated it to become the principal foundation of the cult of St Illtud. If the original site had been on a coastal location it might have been completely abandoned in the ninth century when Viking raids devastated large areas of the Gower and south Wales.¹¹⁷ This might also explain why Wrmonoc thought that the school of St Illtud was by the sea when he wrote in the ninth century.

Relics of the Cult of St Illtud

There are only a few relics associated with St Illtud. As with most of the Welsh saints none of these relics survive in Wales, though there is one still existing in Brittany. There are descriptions of two relics of the cult of St Illtud, an altar and a bell. While the relics associated with St Illtud are typical of the types of relics associated with other Welsh saints, it may be that the altar carried more significance than many relics.

The most important of the relics associated with St Illtud is the floating altar. The altar is mentioned in both the *Life of St Illtud* and in the *Historia Brittonum*. The descriptions not only tell of how the altar came to Wales, but also miracles associated with the relic.¹¹⁸ The episode in the *Life of St Illtud* might be seen as a typical miracle story of the saint, but the fact that it appears in the *Historia* shows the true importance of the relic. The altar appears in the section of the *Historia* that describes the wonders of Britain and is the only relic described. The floating altar of St Illtud was clearly thought of in the ninth century to be one of the most important relics in Britain. This shows that the story about the relic would have been widely known about and the relic would have been a prominent part of the cult of St Illtud. It also suggests that with such an important relic associated with him, St Illtud would have been a well-known and prominent saint in the period.

The second relic associated with St Illtud is one of the most traditional of the Welsh relics: a bell. The story of the bell as it appears in the *Life of St Illtud* is very similar to that which appears in the *Life of St Cadog*: Gildas meets the saint on his way to deliver the bell to someone else but when he arrives the bell will not ring so it is returned to the saint. In the case of St Illtud, the bell was intended for St David but he returns the bell to St Illtud when he learns of the story.¹¹⁹ Doble suggested that the bell was still at Llanilltud Fawr when the *Life*

¹¹⁷ *Annales Cambriae*, p. 57.

¹¹⁸ *Historia Brittonum*, §71; *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §22.

¹¹⁹ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §19.

of *St Illtud* was written as there is some suggestion that the hagiographer had seen the bell: there is an episode which describes how the bell gained a crack ‘which is shown to this day’.¹²⁰ The inclusion of the episode suggests that the hagiographer had seen the bell and wanted to give a reason why it was cracked for others who might see it.¹²¹

As with most other Welsh saints there are no corporeal relics of St Illtud in Wales. In the *Life of St Illtud* the saint travels to Brittany and dies at Dol.¹²² This is clearly just a way for the hagiographer to explain why St Illtud’s body is not at Llanilltud Fawr, in much the same way as with St Cadog having died at Benevento in the *Life of St Cadog*. It is clear that St Illtud did not die at Dol as in the *Life of St Samson* Dol has not yet been founded when St Illtud dies.¹²³ Within Britain there are two sites that claim to be the burial place of St Illtud, Defynnog in Brecon where Bedd Gŵyl Illtud is located and at Glastonbury.¹²⁴ The connection of St Illtud to the site at Defynnog has been discussed above. The link with Glastonbury is uncertain, though two of the saint’s teeth were listed as relics once owned by Glastonbury.¹²⁵ Although there are no corporeal relics found in Wales, there is a reliquary in Brittany, at the church of Landebaeron, Tréguier, that allegedly contains the skull of St Illtud.¹²⁶

Conclusion

The cult of St Illtud remained prominent right through the early medieval period. St Illtud is seen to assume an important position from as early as the seventh century, as shown by the *Life of St Samson*. It portrays St Illtud as a revered wise man with a flourishing school. The author claims to have been to St Illtud’s monastery, so it can be said with some certainty that by the late seventh century there was a prominent foundation dedicated to the saint with a successful school. As shown, there is some evidence that suggests that this early school may not have been at Llanilltud Fawr. The absence of Llanilltud Fawr from the early Breton hagiography despite the prominent role afforded to St Illtud suggests that there may have

¹²⁰ Ibid., §25.

¹²¹ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 135.

¹²² *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §26.

¹²³ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 312.

¹²⁴ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 134.

¹²⁵ Grinsell, ‘The Later History of Tŷ Illtud’, p. 137.

¹²⁶ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III, p. 317; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 137; Grinsell, ‘The Later History of Tŷ Illtud’, p. 138.

been some uncertainty over the location of the school. However, there is not enough evidence to suggest exactly where that site may have been.

While there may be some evidence to suggest that the original school of St Illtud was not at Llanilltud Fawr, it is clear that it was this site that acted as the principal foundation of the cult of St Illtud from at least the late seventh century. Llanilltud Fawr was clearly an important foundation at this time as a bishop from the site is found as a witness to charter 67 of the Llancarfan charters.¹²⁷ As the seat of the bishop of Glamorgan the site would have had great power and importance in the period. This may have been due to the foundation being located close to the *llys* court at Llysworney. Llanilltud Fawr functioned as the burial place for ruling dynasty of Gwent and Glywysing from at least the late eighth century when the first inscribed stone was erected there. The presence of subsequent inscribed stones is evidence of continued patronage of Llanilltud Fawr through the ninth and tenth centuries. A foundation with such strong patronage and political connections, which had previously been the seat of a bishop, would have held a lot of power, and shows the status of Llanilltud Fawr in this period. This is reflected in the portrayals of St Illtud in the Breton hagiography of the ninth and eleventh centuries as well. The saint appears as a legitimising teacher figure showing the perception of him as an important figure, akin to the portrayals of St Gildas and St Dyfrig in the Welsh hagiography. This all suggests that from the seventh century to the eleventh century the cult of St Illtud held a prominent position with an international reputation.

Despite the power held at Llanilltud Fawr, dedications to the saint are not found widely across south-Wales, as is found in the cases of the other major saints' cults of this period. Rather, dedications to the saint are found in three groups; in south-Glamorgan; around the Gower; and in Breconshire. This suggests three concentrated areas where the cult of St Illtud flourished, possibly with important centres at each. Each group of dedications may have had its own purpose and origins. The group in south-Glamorgan obviously complimented the principal foundation of the saint at Llanilltud Fawr. The other two groups may have acted as areas of pilgrimage for the cult of St Illtud. There appears to have been no active effort made to create a pilgrim landscape around Llanilltud Fawr. The most important relic associated with St Illtud, the levitating altar, is thought to have been located at Oystermouth. The foundations in the surrounding area on the Gower may have spread from this initial site, creating a more developed landscape for pilgrims to visit. Similarly, this kind of developed

¹²⁷ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 272-3.

landscape is found in Brecon around the foundations of Llanhamlach and Llanilltyd. Pilgrim landscapes were important for the promotion and growth of a saint's cult and so these areas would have been as important as Llanilltud Fawr for the development of the cult of St Illtud.

The cult of St Illtud appears to have been most active in the ninth and tenth centuries, with a number of royal burials attributed to this period, as well as the erection of a number of inscribed stones at different St Illtud foundations. Llanilltud Fawr continued to be a powerful foundation right through the eleventh century, with inscribed stones erected at the site throughout this period. As with Llancarfan and many other Welsh monastic foundations, Llanilltud Fawr declined after the Norman conquest of south Wales. The properties of Llanilltud Fawr were broken up and granted to Tewkesbury. However, there is some indication that the foundation still held an important position. The portrayal of St Illtud in the *Life of St Cadog* suggests that Llancarfan were actively trying to show their dominance over Llanilltud Fawr. Similarly, his appearance in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* shows that the monks of Llandaf were trying to encroach on the rights of Llanilltud Fawr.¹²⁸ The *Life of St Illtud* changes the narrative found in the *Life of St Cadog*, ensuring that St Illtud was not seen as subordinate to St Cadog, and therefore Llanilltud Fawr was not subject to Llancarfan. However, the *Life of St Illtud* freely enforces the relationship between St Illtud and St Dyfrig, suggesting that while Llanilltud Fawr was still stood strong against Llancarfan, it bowed to the superiority of the bishop of Llandaf.

¹²⁸ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p.14.

The Cult of St Teilo

St Teilo was a saint from south-east Wales usually assigned to the late sixth and early seventh century. The cult of St Teilo provides an interesting case as it had great success for several centuries, fell into decline and then was very prominently reculted in the eleventh century. Initially the principal foundation of the cult of St Teilo was at Llandeilo Fawr in Ysrtad Tywi. Over the course of the early medieval period the cult declined and eventually moved to Llandaf in Glamorgan. This process of decline and reculting is not unique to the cult of St Teilo, but it is one of the most prominent examples of the phenomena.

There are two Lives of St Teilo, both from the twelfth century. One appears in *Vespasian A.XIV* and the other in the *Book of Llandaf*. The Vespasian Life opens with a message saying that it was ‘composed by Master Geoffrey, that is Stephen, brother of Urban, bishop of the church of Llandaf’.¹ The Llandaf Life is mostly an exact copy of the Vespasian version, but has added some sections to the text.² The Vespasian version of the text is considered to preserve an early recension of the text which the author of the Llandaf version has based his text on.³ The Llandaf version dates to 1120-34, when the *Book of Llandaf* was produced.⁴ There is no certain date for the Vespasian version of the Life. The manuscript dates to c.1200, but if Geoffrey was the brother of Urban, then he would probably have been active in the first half of the twelfth century when his brother was also active. There is no way of being certain about the date of the earlier recension that both texts are based on. As the Vespasian Life arguably preserves the early text best, this is the version of the text that will be used for the main part of this chapter.

There are a number of other sources for the cult of St Teilo, other than the Lives of St Teilo. St Teilo appears in the Lives of several other saints. The first record of the saint is in Rhygyfarch’s *Life of St David*, composed c.1091-3. In it St Teilo accompanies St David and St Padarn on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.⁵ Similarly, St Teilo appears in the *Life of St Padarn* in a parallel episode where the three saints go to Jerusalem.⁶ This Life also appears in

¹ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §1; J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 119.

² Textual differences between the two versions are discussed towards the end of this chapter.

³ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 118.

⁴ See Source Material for further discussion of the date of the composition of the *Book of Llandaf*.

⁵ *Vita Sancti David*, §§44-48.

⁶ *Vita Sancti Paterni*, §20.

Vespasian A. XIV with the *Vespasian Life of St Teilo*. Apart from the hagiography there are three important textual sources for the cult of St Teilo. The first of these is the *Lichfield Gospels*, or the *Book of St Chad*. This is a gospel book that was at Llandeilo Fawr from the eighth century to the mid-tenth century when it was removed to Lichfield. There are eight marginal entries in the *Lichfield Gospels*, some of which preserve grants made to Llandeilo Fawr during this period.⁷ The other two sources are both found in the *Book of Llandaf: Braint Teilo* and a number of charters appended to the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo*. While both are found in the *Book of Llandaf* some parts of them preserve earlier evidence for the cult of St Teilo. *Braint Teilo* is the privilege of St Teilo that describes the privileges supposedly granted to Llandaf. The privilege as it appears in the *Book of Llandaf* was composed c.1119-28, but part of the text may have an early origin in the pre-Norman period, probably in the second quarter of the eleventh century.⁸ The charters claim to record grants made to Llandaf over the course of the early medieval period. While many of the charters that appear in the *Book of Llandaf* are not credible, some of the St Teilo charters may preserve early grants to the cult of St Teilo.⁹ Most of the sources are only relevant for the later part of the period addressed, but there are elements of these sources which can give some evidence of the cult of St Teilo in the early medieval period.

Relationships of the Cult of St Teilo

The late date of the composition of the *Life of St Teilo* makes it difficult to realistically perceive any relationships that St Teilo himself may have had, with either local rulers or contemporary saints. Most of the material reflects the situation of the cult in the twelfth century. However, the hagiography, charters and dedication patterns can provide some insight into the early connections of the cult.

The family of a saint often shows the relationships claimed by the saint's cult. St Teilo's family is somewhat problematic. The *Life of St Teilo* contains no details of the saint's family, further than saying that his parents were 'noble'.¹⁰ There are some details about the family of St Teilo found in other sources. The first is found in the *Life of St Euddogwy* in the *Book of*

⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 143-4; D. Jenkins & M.E. Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels Part 1' *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* V (1983), p. 38.

⁸ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §19-20; W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979), p. 19.

⁹ Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, pp. 1-7.

¹⁰ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §2.

Llandaf. The *Life of St Euddogwy* describes Euddogwy's mother as 'Anauued, the daughter of Ensic, whose mother was Gwenhaf, Daughter of Llefoniw' and also states that the martyrs Tyfei and Ishmael were his brothers.¹¹ While this description is of the family of St Euddogwy rather than St Teilo himself, it relates to St Teilo as it also suggests that he was the uncle of St Euddogwy. This would make Anauued the sister of St Teilo, Ensic and Gwenhaf his parents, and Llefoniw his grandfather on his mother's side. There is little to suggest that this genealogy is based on any historical fact. Indeed, as most of the charters associated with St Euddogwy relate to the eighth century, while St Teilo was a saint of the sixth century, the connection between the two saints is highly improbable.¹² It seems likely that the genealogy appears in the *Life of Euddogwy* in order to create a legitimate ancestry for St Euddogwy, a saint who is not found in any sources before he appears in the *Book of Llandaf*.¹³ It also serves to legitimise the position of St Euddogwy as the third patron saint of Llandaf, by making him not only the next bishop of Llandaf after St Teilo, but also a direct descendant of him.

A second genealogy of St Teilo is found in *Bonedd y Saint*, a genealogy compiled in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.¹⁴ The genealogy names St Teilo's father as Ensic who is descended from Cunedda Wledig and Ceredig ap Cunedda.¹⁵ This gives the saint links to the founding rulers of Gwynedd. The connection is confusing in some respects as St Teilo was a saint of south Wales and his cult had little influence in the north. However, this was not unheard of. The genealogy of St Cadog, for example, also claims that St Cadog was descended from Cunedda Wledig, through his paternal grandmother.¹⁶ The cult of St Cadog was in south-east Wales and had no connection to Gwynedd. Versions of the same genealogy of Cunedda Wledig are also found in the *Life of St Carannog* from *Cotton Vespasian A. XIV* and the *Life of St David*.¹⁷ The connection of St Teilo with Cunedda Wledig may reflect the fact that there were no legendary rulers that it could be claimed that the saint was descended from in close proximity to Llandaf, which was the principal foundation of the cult of St Teilo when *Bonedd y Saint* was compiled. It seems likely that the genealogy drew on the

¹¹ *Vita Beati Oudocei*, §1.

¹² Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 89.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.89.

¹⁴ B. Lewis, 'Bonedd y Saint, Brenhinedd y Saesson, and Historical Scholarship at Valle Crucis Abbey', in B. Guy, G. Henley, O. W. Jones & R. Thomas (eds.), *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the Welsh March* (Turnhout, 2020), pp. 139-54.

¹⁵ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966), p. 55.

¹⁶ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §47.

¹⁷ *Vita Sancti David*, §68; B. Guy, *An Introduction to Medieval Welsh Genealogy* (Woodbridge, 2020), p. 82.

genealogies of other saints who were connected to the ruler in order to fabricate a noble ancestry for St Teilo.

The *Life of St Euddogwy* also suggests that St Ishmael and St Tyfei were nephews of St Teilo. These two saints are also found in other parts of the *Book of Llandaf*. Both feature in a list of the disciples of St Dyfrig who had become followers of St Teilo after St Dyfrig's death which appears in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Teilo*.¹⁸ All those mentioned in this list are related to properties or charters that appear in the *Book of Llandaf*. St Tyfei also features in a charter appended to the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Teilo* which describes how St Tyfei was murdered.¹⁹ St Ishmael appears to have been a saint of south-west Wales, with several dedications to him in the areas of Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire.²⁰ He is also found in Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* where he is described as being one of the three 'most faithful disciples' of St David.²¹ It is possible that the composer of the *Life of St Euddogwy* has chosen to make St Ishmael the nephew of St Teilo and the brother of St Euddogwy to validate opposing claims with St Davids over the properties of the cult of St Ishmael.

An important relationship that is established in many pieces of hagiography is that between a saint and their teacher. *The Life of St Teilo* suggests that he had two major teachers: St Dyfrig and St Paulinus. According to the hagiography St Dyfrig taught St Teilo from childhood until he surpassed St Dyfrig.²² St Dyfrig appears only in this early episode and is not mentioned thereafter. The hagiography draws another implied link between the two saints by making St Teilo the successor of St Dyfrig as the bishop of Llandaf. St Paulinus appears as St Teilo's second teacher. St Teilo went to study under St Paulinus after leaving St Dyfrig.²³ Very little is mentioned about his education under St Paulinus. As with St Dyfrig, St Paulinus does not appear again in the *Life of St Teilo* after this episode.

There has been some confusion over the exact roles played by St Teilo's two teachers in the hagiography. St Teilo is also taught by St Paulinus in the *Life of St David*. St Paulinus' appearance in the *Life of St Teilo* could be seen as an attempt by the composer to copy themes from the *Life of St David*, as has been done in several other episodes in the *Life of St Teilo*.²⁴ However, Gilbert H. Doble argues that it is more likely that there was a connection between

¹⁸ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §16

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, §28.

²⁰ G.H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), pp. 189-90.

²¹ *Vita Sancti David*, §15.

²² *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §3.

²³ *Ibid.*, §3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, §§4, 5, 7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§10, 16-19, 35, 44-8.

St Teilo and St Paulinus.²⁵ This is reflected in the proximity between Llandeilo Fawr, the early centre of the cult of St Teilo, and Llandoverly, a major cult site of St Paulinus.²⁶ There is also some confusion over the identity of St Paulinus who appears in the *Life of St Teilo* St Paul Aurélian appears as the disciple of St Illtud in the *Life of St Illtud*. As discussed in the previous chapter, there was clearly a close connection between the cults of St Illtud and St Paul Aurélian. Doble suggested that St Paul from the *Life of St Illtud* and St Paulinus from the *Life of St Teilo* are the same saint. He suggested that the cult of St Paulinus was found across south Wales, with connections to both the cults of St Illtud and St Teilo: seen in south-east Wales in the dedications at Llangors and Llanhamlach; and in Carmarthenshire at Llandoverly and Llandeilo Fawr. This is a possibility, though as Doble also notes, Paulinus was not an uncommon name in the period, and is found on four inscribed stone monuments across Wales, at Llandoverly, Caerwent, Port Talbot and Llandysilio.²⁷ It is unlikely that all these stones refer to the same person. The St Paul who appears in the *Life of St Illtud* is the same St Paul of Wrmonoc's *Life of St Paul*. In this piece of hagiography St Paul returns to Brittany to carry out his ministry. It is unlikely, then, that this would be the same saint that had a school and extensive cult in Carmarthenshire. It seems more likely that St Paul in the *Life of St Illtud* represents a completely different saint to the one found in the *Life of St Teilo*.

The relationship between St Dyfrig and St Teilo is more doubtful. The only connections between St Dyfrig and St Teilo are the ones found in the hagiography: geographically the two saints were found on opposite sides of Wales, with the cult of St Dyfrig centred on Ergyng and the cult of St Teilo in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire.²⁸ It is more likely that St Dyfrig is introduced as the teacher of St Teilo in order to create a link between the two saints and to validate the claims of Llandaf to the properties of St Teilo.²⁹ This suggests that the relationship between St Dyfrig and St Teilo may have been entirely fabricated in the twelfth century by those at Llandaf. However, as there is little evidence for the education of St Teilo from before this period, it could be possible that the author was drawing on local traditions that linked the two saints: the nature of the *Book of Llandaf* as a text that was majorly doctored means that links established in the hagiography must remain questionable, leaving doubts over the authenticity of the relationship between the two saints and their cults.

²⁵ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 169

²⁶ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1954), p. 58.

²⁷ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 149-56.

²⁸ For a discussion of locations of the cults of St Teilo and St Dubricius see below.

²⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 81.

As already mentioned, there was a potentially strong relationship between the cults of St Teilo and St David. There are several similar episodes that appear in both Geoffrey's *Life of St Teilo* and Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*: education under St Paulinus; the saving of the book from rain; overcoming the tyrant Baia (Boia); and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem of SS. David, Teilo and Padarn.³⁰ These episodes appear in both Lives but have minor differences, especially the details surrounding the Irish tyrant Baia.³¹ Many of these differences are insignificant, and do not award any advantage or prestige to either saint, which suggests that Geoffrey was not copying Rhygyfarch, but that both authors took these episodes from an earlier source.³² The details concerning the pilgrimage to Jerusalem may have originated from an earlier version of the *Life of St Padarn* that is mentioned by Rhygyfarch.³³

The nature of the relationship between St Teilo and St David is unclear. St Teilo appears in the *Life of St David*, and similarly St David appears in the *Life of St Teilo*: but the portrayals of the saints differ greatly. In the *Life of St David*, Rhygyfarch names St Teilo, or Eliud, as one of St David's 'most faithful disciples' and later states that St Teilo had once been a monk of Vallis Rosina, St David's monastery. When they go to Jerusalem the focus is on St David and only he receives the prestige of being made archbishop and having gifts bestowed upon him by the patriarch of Jerusalem.³⁴ In contrast, the *Life of St Teilo* portrays the two saints as being friends who met while both studying under St Paulinus. Whilst in Jerusalem both St David and St Teilo are made bishops and each receives a gift.³⁵ It is most likely that these different portrayals reflect the relationship between the cults of the two saints in the periods that each of the Lives were written. The cult of St David was the most prominent saint's cult in Wales in the eleventh century when Rhygyfarch was writing. It may be that Rhygyfarch was trying to strengthen the position of St David's by emphasising the superiority of its patron saint over those powerful saints' cults around it, namely those of St Teilo and St Padarn. Geoffrey, writing several decades later, after the Norman conquest of Wales and the rise of Llandaf as an ecclesiastical power was trying to put St Teilo on an equal footing with St David, who was recognised as the patron saint of the most powerful ecclesiastical site in Wales.³⁶

³⁰ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§3, 4, 5, 7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§10, 16-19, 35, 44-48.

³¹ S. Baring-Gould & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV (London, 1913), p. 228.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 226; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 170.

³³ *Vita Sancti David*, §44.

³⁴ *Vita Sancti David*, §§15, 44, 47-48.

³⁵ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§3, 8.

³⁶ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 171.

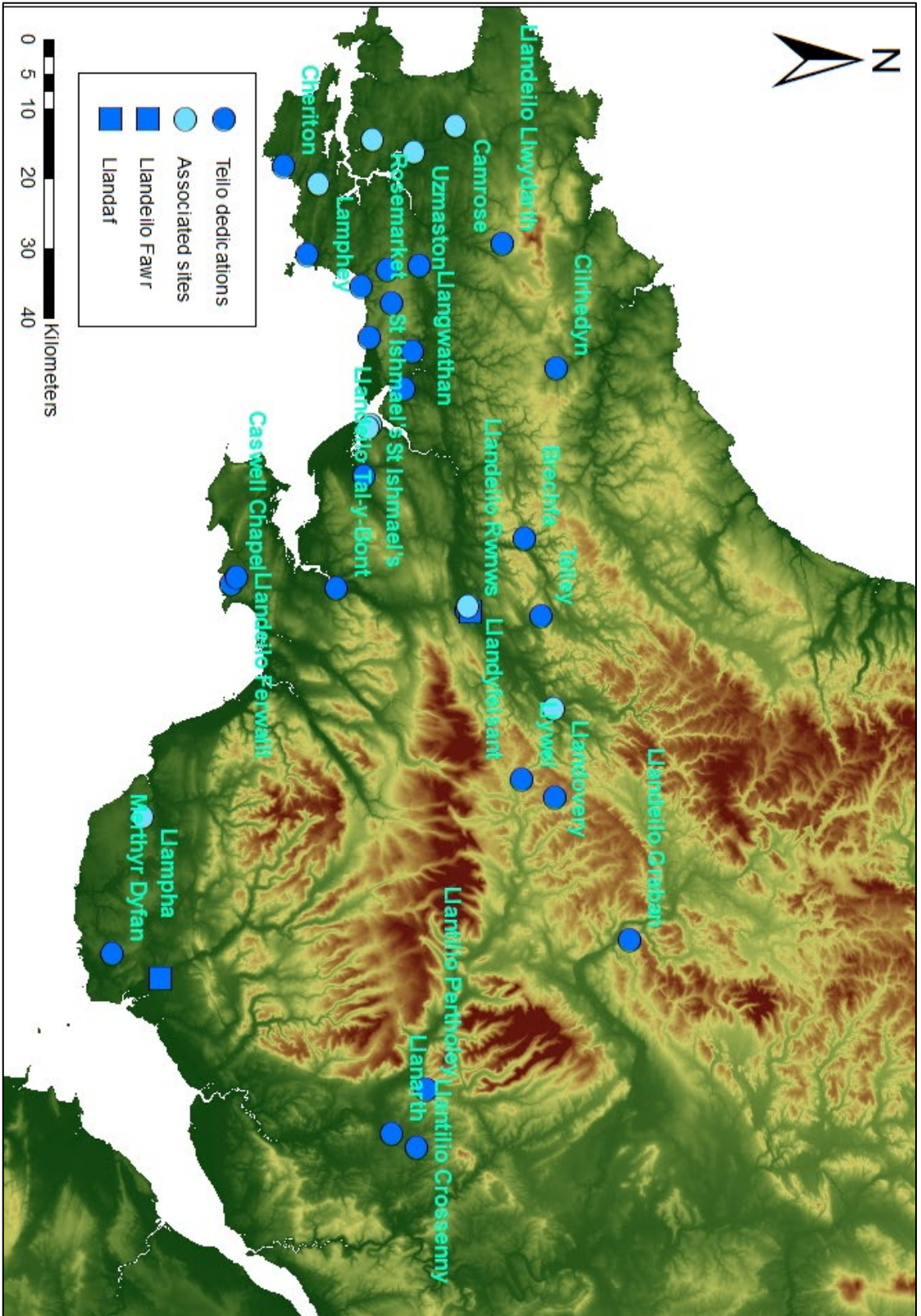
However, while this may reflect a level of competition between the two cults in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is clear that in previous centuries the cults of St Teilo and St David had enjoyed close ties. One of the marginal entries in the *Lichfield Gospels* suggests that there may have been a practice of clergy moving between Llandeilo Fawr and St Davids. Chad 3, 4 and 5 all have a certain 'Nobis' in their witness lists, who is given the title in Chad 5 of 'episcopus teliau'.³⁷ The *Annales Cambriae* records a 'Nobis episcopus' at St Davids in 840.³⁸ This suggests that at least in the ninth century relations between the two episcopal centres were close and that bishops of St Davids were drawn from the clergy of Llandeilo Fawr.

The dedications to each saint are in close proximity, which would lend itself to the theory that there was a close connection between the two cults during the early medieval period. Within Ystrad Tywi, the heartland of the cult of St Teilo, there are nine dedications to St David, and a further seven in the surrounding areas of Carmarthen.³⁹ Of these sites there are three, Abergwili, Capel y Groes and Henllan Amgoed, which have inscribed stones at the sites which date to between the sixth and eighth centuries. Likewise, a number of St Teilo dedications appear in Dyfed as can be seen in Map 10. This suggests that the two cults had a close relationship in the early medieval period which allowed them to create foundations within the areas not under their control. The hagiography and the dedication distribution portray conflicting images of the relationship between the two saints, but the relationship between the two cults had clearly changed over this period. The marginalia and topology suggest that in the early part of the period there was a close relationship between the cults of St Teilo and St David. However, later in the period when St Davids began to assert its dominance and the cult of St Teilo moved to Llandaf this relationship had clearly disappeared. The hagiography clearly reflects this change in the relationship. The similarity of the episodes that appear in both the *Life of St Teilo* and the *Life of St David* suggest that they both were based on an earlier text that was probably written in an earlier period when

³⁷ *Extracts from the Book of St Chad*, pp. xlv, xlvi.

³⁸ J.R. Davies, 'The archbishopric of St Davids and the bishops of *Clas Cynidr*', in J.W. Evans, and J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 298; Jenkins & Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia', p. 52.

³⁹ H. James, 'The geography of the cult of St David: a study of dedication patterns in the medieval diocese', in J.W. Evans, and J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 45-6.



Map 10 Sites dedicated to St Teilo or associated with the cult of St Teilo in south Wales

the cults were closer and so portrays the two saints as having a close relationship. The discrepancies between the two Lives reflect an attempt by St Davids in the late eleventh century to use the *Life of St David* to show that St David was the superior saint, to support their claims over the cults of St Teilo and St Padarn.

As already mentioned, there is evidence to suggest a relationship between the cult of St Teilo and the cult of St Padarn. This can also be seen in the joint journey of the three saints to Jerusalem that has already been mentioned. Although details of the trip vary, the incident appears in the Lives of each of the three saints.⁴⁰ This seems to have been an important event for it to have been treated so prominently in each Life. Doble suggests that the episode was just copied, from Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* to the *Life of St Padarn*, and then later into the *Life of St Teilo*.⁴¹ However, as already stated, it probably originated in an earlier version of the *Life of Padarn*. The gifts that are given to the saints whilst in Jerusalem in the hagiography were genuine relics connected to each of the saints. It may be that there was a tradition created by the monks of Llandeilo Fawr, St Davids and Llanbadarn Fawr of this joint pilgrimage in order to support the relationship between the foundations. The story would have given prestige to each foundation, as would having their relics originate from Jerusalem.⁴² This all suggests that there was an early tradition of close ties between Llandeilo Fawr, St Davids and Llanbadarn Fawr. In the *Welsh Triads* St Teilo, St David and St Padarn are named together as the 'Three Blessed Visitors of the Island of Britain'. This grouping of the three saints could be seen to suggest that there was a traditional perception in Wales of them appearing together. However, Bromwich suggests that this particular triad, and another concerning St Teilo were created by the scribe of *Peniarth 50*, the fifteenth-century manuscript in which this triad appears.⁴³ While this does not reflect a tradition about the three saints early in the period, it does show that the perception of the connection persisted well into the fifteenth century.

The only other saint that appears in the *Life of St Teilo* is St Máedhóg, or Aidan of Ferns. He appears in an episode with St Teilo where they leave a book open outside in the rain while they tame two stags to carry wood from the forest to the monastery.⁴⁴ St Máedhóg's

⁴⁰ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§44-48; *Vita Sancti Paterni*, §20.

⁴¹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV, p. 230; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 176.

⁴² K. Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage, c.1100-1500*, (NY, 2018), p. 94.

⁴³ R. Bromwich (ed.) *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* (Cardiff, 1961), pp. xxxi-xxxii, 204.

⁴⁴ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §5.

appearance in the *Life of St Teilo* does not, in this case, indicate that there was any relationship between the two saints as the whole episode is copied from the *Life of St Cadog*, in which the same events occur to St Finnian.⁴⁵

Many saints' Lives include legendary or real rulers of an area to legitimise the position and claims of a saint. The *Life of St Teilo* is unusual in that it does not include any incidents with local rulers that are so common in Welsh hagiography. Boia, the Pictish leader who comes into conflict with St Teilo and St David is the only person of power that St Teilo comes into contact with.⁴⁶ St Teilo plays no active role in overcoming Boia, and receives no guarantees or privileges from the incident. The whole episode is based on a similar one from the *Life of St David*. It seems as if the episode was copied by Geoffrey, but with no intention of using Boia as a foil to the saint as is often found. The reason for the absence of any of the stereotypical episodes between rulers and the saint in the *Life of St Teilo* is probably because Geoffrey did not feel that it was needed, as he was writing in a period when the cult of St Teilo was safely based at Llandaf, a powerful ecclesiastical institution that did not need to fear local rulers, and who had their privileges confirmed by papal bull rather than by anybody else.

The Cult of St Teilo in the Landscape

St Teilo has a very obvious presence in the landscape of south Wales. There are eleven places that bear his name and many more sites dedicated to him. The *Book of Llandaf* contains several charters with properties granted to St Teilo. This should make identifying the presence of the cult of St Teilo in the landscape relatively easy, but many of these charters may not actually be genuine early grants made to the cult of St Teilo. Lack of source material for the earliest period of the cult means that the dates of the foundation of many St Teilo sites are unknown. Those with closer dating that are recorded in the charter material may reflect later claims of Llandaf in the twelfth century rather than real grants to the saint, as discussed below. Geoffrey's *Life of St Teilo* refers to no specific places to suggest any ties the saint had to any specific places in Wales. However, the pattern of distribution can reflect how the cult of St Teilo grew from the sixth to eleventh centuries, and detailed analysis of the charter material can reveal some sites that were most likely genuine early grants to St Teilo and his

⁴⁵ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 175.

⁴⁶ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §4.

successors. The presence of inscribed stones at several St Teilo dedications can also help to indicate which sites were important to the cult of St Teilo.

There are two principal foundations of the cult of St Teilo: Llandaf and Llandeilo Fawr. St Dyfrig, St Teilo and St Euddogwy are the three patron saints of Llandaf. *The Book of Llandaf* claims that the see was created by St Dyfrig in the fifth century, with the position of bishop then passing to St Teilo. This was not true, and was part of a propaganda campaign in the twelfth century designed by Llandaf in order to legitimise their position as the seat of the bishop of south-east Wales.⁴⁷ It was true that by the twelfth century, and certainly before that, the cult of St Teilo had relocated its cult centre to Llandaf. It is thought that this move took place sometime in the late tenth or early eleventh centuries, probably during the episcopate of Bishop Joseph, who was bishop c. 1022-45.⁴⁸ It was during this time that a large number of land grants in the area of Llandaf were made to the church of St Teilo. Wendy Davies suggests that this meant that Llandaf had become the principal church of St Teilo by this period.⁴⁹

The principal foundation of St Teilo prior to this was Llandeilo Fawr, Carmarthenshire. The foundation is located in the south-east of Ystrad Tywi close to the River Towy. In the local area of Llandeilo Fawr are several sites associated with St Teilo. Close to the church itself is a holy well called Ffynnon Deilo. Within the parish there are also three other sites that bear a Teilo eponym: Carreg Deilo, Ynys Deilo and Maenor Deilo, a local hamlet.⁵⁰ Unfortunately there are no records or traditions that explain how St Teilo was associated with any of these sites, nor does the hagiography reflect how he may have been connected to any points in the local landscape. The presence of the saint can solely be seen in the landscape through the physical and topographical influences which remain.

In the wider landscape of south Wales St Teilo's presence is clear. There are a large number of St Teilo dedications found across south Wales. There is some difficulty in identifying which sites associated with St Teilo actually reflect dedications that were part of the cult of St Teilo in the early medieval period: when the see moved to Llandaf there was a period of reculting which may have led to new sites being attributed to St Teilo, as can be seen in the Llandaf charters. However, those sites that bear St Teilo's name probably do reflect those

⁴⁷ See Introduction for further discussion.

⁴⁸ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 16-17; W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978), p. 155.

⁴⁹ Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, p. 155.

⁵⁰ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 198.

sites which were St Teilo properties, for at least some time before the Norman period and the construction of the *Book of Llandaf*.⁵¹ Likewise, those sites with a western distribution are more likely to apply to the period before the altar of St Teilo moved to Llandaf.

Those sites dedicated to St Teilo are mostly found in western Carmarthenshire and eastern Pembrokeshire, centred on Ystrad Tywi. In Carmarthenshire there are St Teilo dedications in Brechfa, Capel Teilo in Kidwelly, Capel Teilo in Talley, Cilrhedyn, Llandeilo Abercywyn, Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Rwnws, Llangwathan, Pendine and Llanddowror. In Pembrokeshire there are dedications in Cheriton, Cronwern, Eglwys Lwyd, Llandeilo Llwydarth, Penally and Amroth. There are also several dedications in south-east Wales. In Glamorganshire there are dedications at Caswell Chapel, Llandeilo Ferwallt, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont and Merthyr Dyfan. There are three sites found to the far east of Wales in Monmouthshire, at Llanarth, Llantilio Crossenny and Llantilio Pertholey. In Breconshire there are dedications at Llandeilo'r-fân and Llywel. There is one final St Teilo dedication in Radnorshire at Llandeilo Graban.⁵² The first record of these sites is found in the Book of Llandaf either in the hagiography or the charters. Llandeilo Fawr and Penally both appear in the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo*.⁵³ Brechfa, Cilrhedyn, Llandeilo Abercywyn, Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Rwnws, Llangwathan, Pendine, Llanddowror, Cheriton, Cronwern, Llandeilo Llwydarth, Penally and Amroth all appear in a list of properties of St Teilo appended to charter 123. This list probably represents a genuine list of charters to St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr, as discussed below.⁵⁴ Llanarth and Llantilio Pertholey appear in charter 121 and charter 122 respectively, two of the charters appended to the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* that represents genuine early grants.⁵⁵ Llandeilo'r-fân appears in charter 253, a confirmation of grants and privileges made by Rhydderch ab Iestyn which dates to c. 1025.⁵⁶ Eglwys Lwyd is recorded in the regrant of charter 240 which is dated to c. 970. Llantilio Crossenny and Caswell Chapel both appear in a charter from 1119. Kidwelly is recorded in c. 1120. Llandeilo Tal-y-bont appears in 1129. Merthyr Dyfan appears in a charter of 1254. Llandeilo

⁵¹ J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 369-70.

⁵² R. Rees, *An Essay on the Welsh Saints or the Primitive Christians usually considered to have been the Founders of Churches in Wales* (London, 1836), pp. 326-51; A.W. Wade-Evans, *Parochiale Wallicanum* (Stow-on-the-Wold, 1911), pp. 10-13, 16, 23, 27-8, 30-35, 46, 52-3.

⁵³ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §18.

⁵⁴ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 194.

⁵⁵ Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, pp. 166-7.

⁵⁶ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 88.

Ferwallt, Llywel and Talley are first recorded in a charter of 1350.⁵⁷ This amounts to twenty-seven dedications to St Teilo in south Wales, stretching from one side of the country to the other, that probably pre-date the Norman conquest of Wales. This is an extremely high number of dedications for an early medieval saint in Wales, with a very broad distribution, as seen on Map 10. The quantity and breadth of the dedications suggests that the cult of St Teilo must have been highly successful for some time.

The general distribution of the sites is south-western. Bowen suggests that the cult spread from the area of Llandeilo Fawr in two main directions: east along the coastal route towards Kidwelly and the Gower; and east along the Roman road running from Llandovery to the Usk Valley. He also suggests that the dedications in Radnorshire and Brecknockshire may be explained by a branch of the Roman road heading north from the main east-west road.⁵⁸ Map 10 clearly shows the distribution of all these Teilo dedications. As the map shows, the distribution is predominantly western, with some clear spread into Dyfed. This overlap in dedications further promotes the idea of an early relationship between the cults of St Teilo and St David. Only Merthyr Dyfan lies in close proximity to Llandaf. This could suggest that it was a later dedication, taken into the cult of St Teilo during the tenth century period of reculting, especially as Merthyr Dyfan is dedicated to St Teilo and St Dyfan, a saint with no real connection to St Teilo.

The group of three dedications in Monmouthshire is confusing as they do not appear to be close to any other foundation from which they could have been founded, nor are they located on any main route from any of the other main dedications. The area is more closely associated with St Dyfrig than St Teilo, whose cult was centred on the opposite side of south Wales. It should also be noted that Llantilio Pertholey and Llantilio Crosseny are the only two sites to bear the eponym of St Teilo as ‘-tilio’ rather than ‘-deilo’. This may be a similar situation as the ‘Llangatwg’ dedications to St Cadog that are found in the same area of south-east Wales: the name difference shows English or Welsh influence on the form. It is possible that the three foundations were from the reculting of St Teilo in the same way as Merthyr Mawr and Merthyr Dyfan, but it seems more likely that the three represent a small area of south-east Wales where a follower of St Teilo may have founded a few sites to the saint which later became isolated from the main body of St Teilo properties. The practice of sites

⁵⁷ J.B. Coe, *Place Names of the Book of Llandaf* (PhD Thesis, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 2001), pp. 71, 91, 93, 192, 206, 413, 429, 434, 452, 453, 455, 456, 484 495, 529, 595, 679, 794, 798.

⁵⁸ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, pp. 56-7.

being named after a saint had clearly ended by the eleventh century, as the sites dedicated to St Dyfrig by Herewald in this period did not have their names altered.⁵⁹ This means that Llantilio Pertholey and Llantilio Crosseny at least must have been founded before the eleventh century, which suggests that they were not from the later period of the reculting of St Teilo. Both Llantilio Pertholey and Llanarth lie on streams close to where they join the River Usk. It is possible the river was the means by which a disciple of the house of St Teilo came to found these three properties.

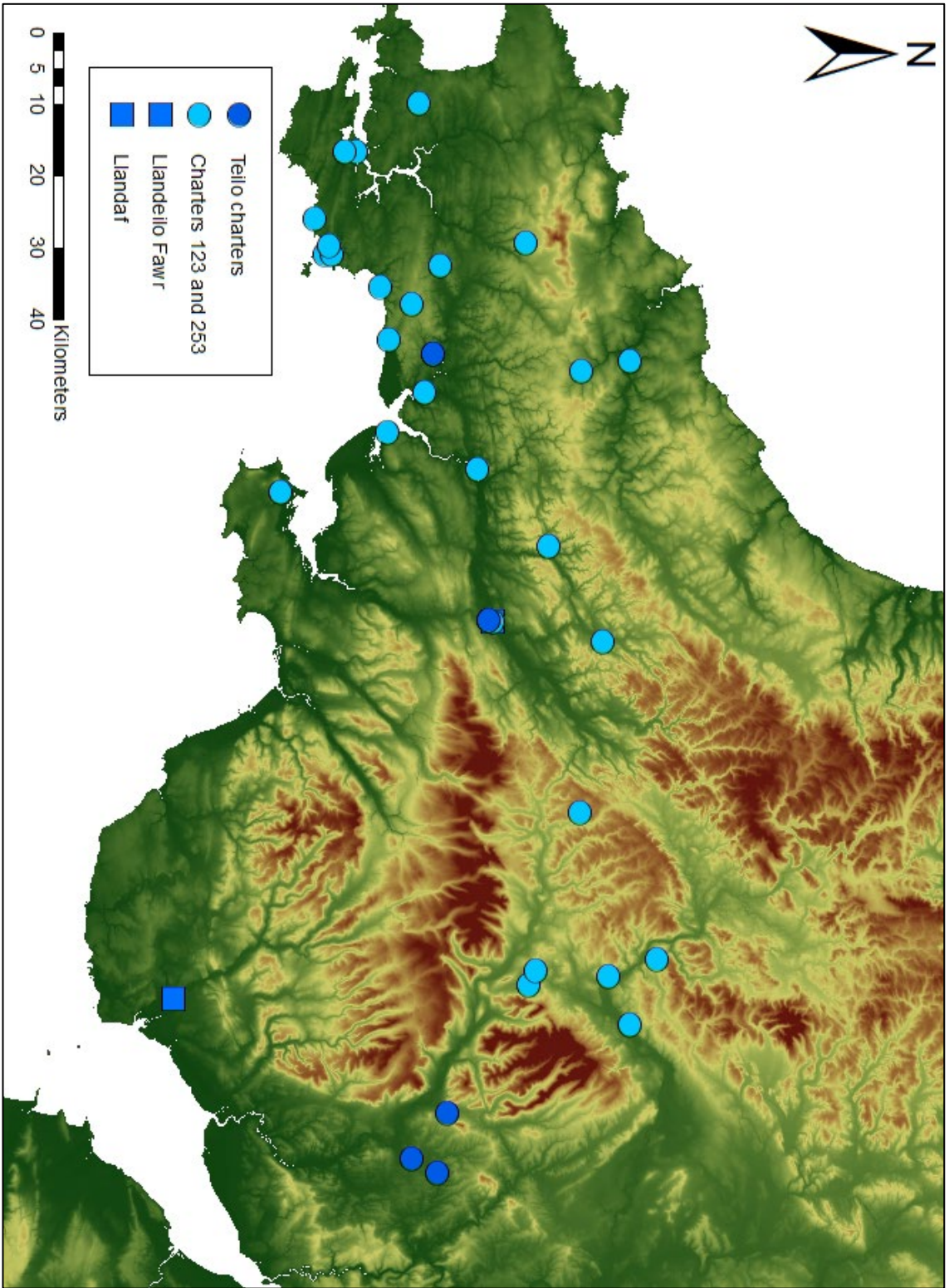
It is interesting to note the correlation between many Teilo sites and rivers or the coast. Llanarth lies on the Clawdd Brook, Llantilio Pertholey lies on the Gavenny River and Llantilio Crosseny lies on the River Trothy. Brechfa lies on the river Cothi as does Capel Teilo at Talley. Llandeilo Abercywyn is sites where the River Cywyn joins the River Taf. Llandeilo'r-fân is intersected by three streams which join the River Usk. Llandeilo Fawr itself is located on the banks of the River Towy. Llandeilo Tal-y-bont is located on the River Loughor. Llandeilo Graban is on the River Wye.⁶⁰ As can be seen clearly in Map 10 several sites follow the coast: Penally, Pendine, Capel Teilo in Kidwelly, Llandeilo Ferwallt, Caswell Chapel and Merthyr Dyfan all follow the south coastline. This may suggest that there was some spread of dedications to St Teilo along river and coastal routes as well as the main routeways of south Wales.

In the *Book of Llandaf* there are several charters appended to the *Life of St Teilo* that record grants supposedly made to St Teilo. W. Davies has suggested that charters 121-127, those which concern St Teilo, date to the period between the early sixth century and the late eighth century. However, she also argues that only charters 121 and 122, which record grants made at Llanarth and Llantilio Pertholey, are the only authentic grants in this group, while the lack of witnesses and irregularities in form suggest that the others were either late grants to the church of St Teilo, or forgeries made during the compilation of the *Book of Llandaf*.⁶¹ As has already been noted, these two properties lie in south-east Wales, far from the main distribution of St Teilo dedications. Davies has offered two possible explanations for this: either that these two properties were actually originally grants made to the house of St Dyfrig

⁵⁹ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 393.

⁶⁰ Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of Wales Vol. I & II*, pp. AMR, BRE, LLA, PEN, TAL.

⁶¹ Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, pp. 166-7; Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, p. 12.



Map 11 Properties found in charters in the Book of Llandaf

rather than St Teilo, and were transferred to St Teilo's name to support the claims of another St Teilo foundation in the area; or that they reflect a genuine St Teilo presence in south-east Wales.⁶² The only other known foundation of St Teilo in the area is Llantilio Crosseny. Llantilio Crosseny is the property granted in 123. If Llantilio Crosseny was powerful enough to claim two Dyfrig properties and rededicate them to St Teilo it seems unlikely that Llandaf would then need to formulate another charter to confirm that Llantilio Crosseny was also a St Teilo property. It seems more likely that the three properties represent a small area of sites genuinely dedicated to St Teilo.

Although W. Davies argues that none of the other Teilo charters are credible, John Reuben Davies has suggested that they may have been properties that were owned by another house of St Teilo rather than complete forgeries.⁶³ W. Davies does not address the properties appended to charter 123 which comprises of a list of St Teilo properties. Doble suggests that the list represents a list of St Teilo properties originally compiled at Llandeilo Fawr, as all the properties named are from south-west Wales and Llandeilo Fawr is the only significant St Teilo foundation missing from the list.⁶⁴ Map 11 clearly shows the western distribution of those properties in charter 123, with many of them located in Dyfed. It is unlikely that these properties would have been granted to Llandaf, but they may well have been foundations associated with Llandeilo Fawr. Charter 125 lists the grant of Llandeilo Brwnws. While the charter may not have been authentic, it is probable that the foundation had some connection with the church of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr, suggested by the name of the site and its close proximity with Llandeilo Fawr. The last identifiable site that appears in the charters is Llanddowror, from charter 127. It seems doubtful that this represents a real charter, but acts more as story explaining the name of the site.⁶⁵ The foundation is also located right in the centre of the area of the sites in charter 123. The fact that it does not appear with the other foundations in this list would seem to suggest that it was not an original St Teilo site associated with Llandeilo Fawr. However, the site does appear in the list of properties confirmed by Rhydderch ab Iestyn that probably dates to 1025. It is more likely that this is one of the many sites that Llandaf wanted to claim from St Davids by using its connection with St Teilo foundations.

⁶² Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, p. 153.

⁶³ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 367.

⁶⁴ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 194.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 196-7.

There are a number of early medieval inscribed stones associated with St Teilo dedications, as can be seen on Map 12. There are several in Carmarthenshire at Llandeilo Fawr, Llanddowror and Llanpumsaint, a site associated with the cult of St Teilo through the dedication to St Paulinus. There are four inscribed stones at Llandeilo Fawr: one with a Latin inscription from the late fifth or early sixth century; a cross slab dated between the seventh and ninth centuries; and a cross head and cross slab from the ninth century.⁶⁶ At Llanddowror there are two inscribed stones both with inscribed crosses which date to between the ninth and eleventh centuries.⁶⁷ There is a singular stone at Llanpumsaint, with an incised linear cross dating from the seventh century to the ninth century.⁶⁸ In Pembrokeshire there are inscribed stone monuments found at Penally and Llandeilo Lwydarth. There are four inscribed stones at Penally: one is a rough incised cross dating to the seventh to ninth centuries; a cross pillar from the late ninth or early tenth century; a fragment of a cross shaft with a Latin inscription from the same date; and a cross shaft from the early tenth century.⁶⁹ There are three inscribed stones at Llandeilo Lwydarth, and one of these is multiphase. There are two stones with Latin inscriptions which date to the sixth century. One of these stones also has a cross inscribed at the top which dates from the seventh to ninth centuries. The third stone has an incised ring cross and fish which also dates from the seventh to ninth centuries.⁷⁰

There are also several inscribed stone monuments associated with St Teilo sites in Glamorgan, at Llandaf, Llandeilo Tal-y-Bont and Merthyr Mawr. At Llandaf there are five inscribed stones. One is the head of a pillar cross which dates to the tenth or eleventh century. There are also two cross carved grave markers belonging to the late eleventh century or early twelfth century. The final two stones have Latin inscriptions dating to between the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁷¹ There is a singular stone at Llandeilo Tal-y-Bont. It is a short pillar with a pecked cross dating to between the seventh and ninth centuries, and a later cross from either the thirteenth or fourteenth century.⁷²

⁶⁶ N. Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales* Vol II (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 237-44.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 235-7.

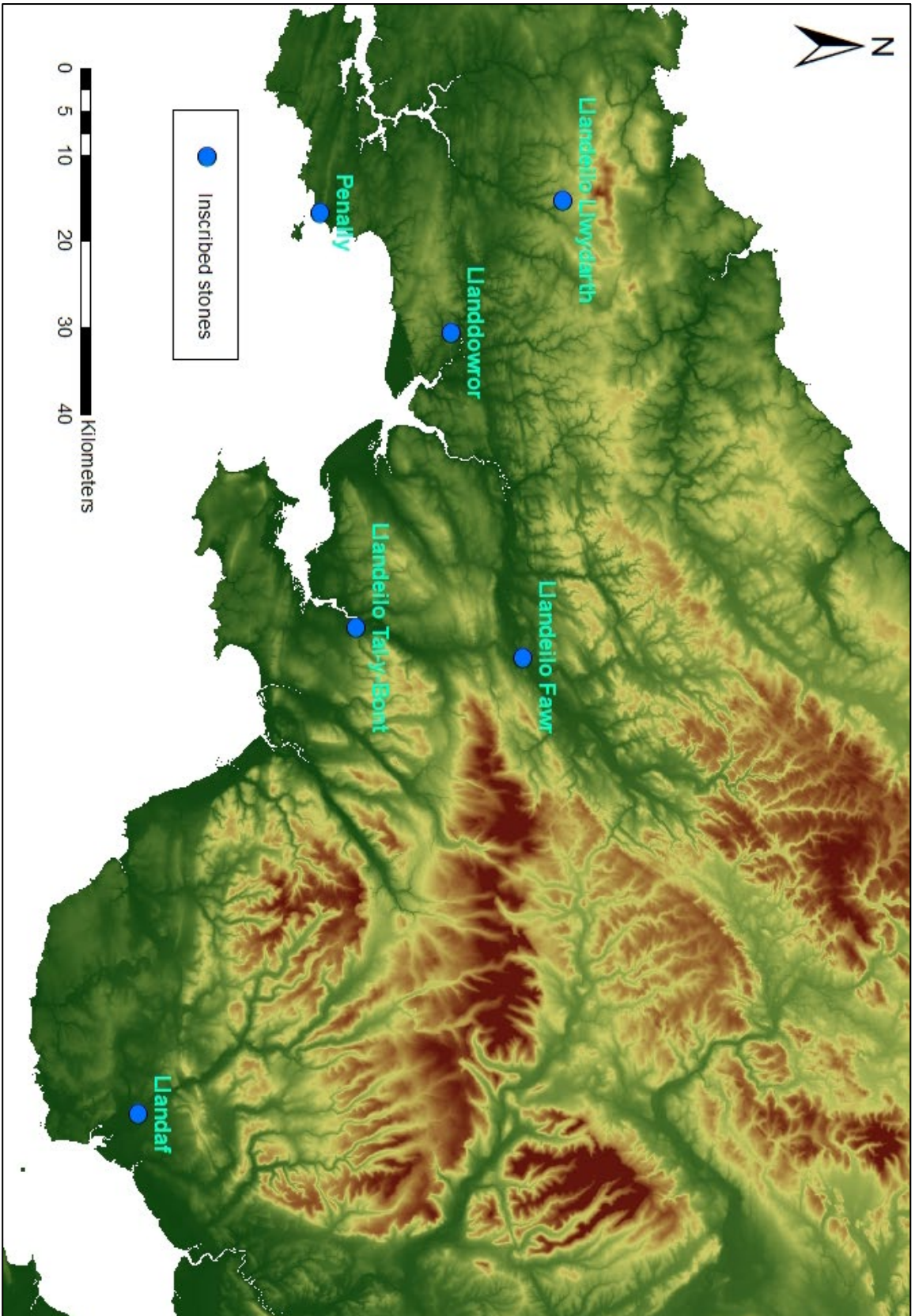
⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 260-1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 410-22.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 327-32.

⁷¹ M. Redknap & J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales* Vol I (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 320-7.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 327-8.



Map 12 Inscribed stones found at sites dedicated to St Teilo

There can be seen four main stages for the erection of these stones. The earliest stones were erected in the fifth and sixth centuries at Llandeilo Fawr and Llandeilo Llwydarth. These stones all bear Latin dedications. There is a stone at Llandeilo Fawr and two stones at Llandeilo Llwydarth which record Irish names.⁷³ This suggests that there may have been local Irish rulers patronising St Teilo dedications in this area. The inscriptions on the stones show that they were successful institutions at this early stage, with probable patronage from local rulers. It is significant that there are two related stones at Llandeilo Llwydarth, recording dedications to possible brothers, suggesting that there was an association between a local ruling dynasty and this site, not just an individual leader.⁷⁴

The second period of erection lies between the seventh and ninth centuries. It is during this period that stones were erected at a greater number of St Teilo sites: Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Llwydarth, Llanpumsaint, Penally and Llandeilo Tal-y-Bont. In all but two of these cases the stones were rough slabs with simple incised crosses.⁷⁵ The two exceptions are from Llandeilo Fawr. One of these is a cross head with interlace and the other a slab with a ring cross and interlace, both dating to the ninth century.⁷⁶ This suggests that in this period several St Teilo foundations were enjoying patronage which allowed them to erect stone sculptures, and that Llandeilo Fawr as the principal St Teilo foundation had the resources and patronage to erect at least two intricately carved stone sculptures. This period probably marks the time when Llandeilo Fawr was at its most powerful.

The third period of erection spans from the ninth century to the end of the tenth century. This period sees a move away from Llandeilo Fawr. This period saw stones erected at Llanddowror and Penally. The two stones at Llanddowror reflect the style of those in the previous period, with rough stones carved with crosses.⁷⁷ The three stones from Penally are of a much more intricate style, more akin to those at Llandeilo Fawr. One of the cross shafts bears a Latin inscription dedicated to 'Maildomnaig', another name with Irish origins.⁷⁸ Edwards suggests that the appearance of intricate stone monuments with dedications at Penally in this period may reflect a move of the principal house of St Teilo from Llandeilo Fawr to Penally.⁷⁹ It may well be that incursions from Gwynedd in the ninth and tenth

⁷³ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 238, 328, 331.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 327-31.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 327-8; Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 243-4, 260-1, 422, 329-32.

⁷⁶ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 239-42

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 235-7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 410-21.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

centuries into Carmarthenshire forced local rulers further south and they relocated near to Penally which then received their patronage instead of Llandeilo Fawr.

The final period of erection is from the eleventh to twelfth centuries. At this time stones were only erected at Llandaf. Two stones at Llandaf bear Latin inscriptions, one of which reads ‘of Bishop Joseph’. The remaining stones are all intricate, highly stylised stone crosses or grave markers.⁸⁰ This suggests a phase of the cult of St Teilo when it had become firmly based at Llandaf. The stone to Bishop Joseph at Llandaf supports the theory that the cult moved during the episcopate of Bishop Joseph in the early eleventh century.

From the physical evidence it can be seen that there were several sites that were important St Teilo foundations. Llandeilo Fawr was the principal foundation of St Teilo from the fifth or sixth century up to some point in the late ninth century. Until that point it enjoyed the patronage of a local ruling family, with several stone monuments erected at the site over the period. St Teilo was clearly prominent in the area which can be seen by the places in the local landscape named for the saint. Llandeilo Llwydarth was also clearly an important site during the same period, with several inscribed stones erected at the site and evidence of local patronage. There is also a holy well to the saint close by which is associated with a relic of St Teilo, which is discussed below. Significantly, the site is one of the seven bishop houses of Dyfed. *Llyfr Blegywryd*, *Llyfr Cyfnerth* and a number of Latin lawbooks preserve a text thought to originate in the late ninth century or early tenth century which contains a section on the seven bishop houses of Dyfed. Thomas Charles-Edwards has identified four of the seven sites mentioned as St Davids in Pebidiog, St Ishmael’s in Rhos, Rhoscrowther in Penfro and Llandeulyddog in Gwarthaf. Another of the churches is identifiable as Llandeilo Llwydarth, but this is superseded by Llawhaden in a later redaction of the text. Another of the churches is generally identified as St Issels near Tenby⁸¹ This suggests that the site had a very high status earlier in the period, not just as a St Teilo foundation but as part of the episcopal organisation of south-west Wales.⁸² The importance of the site declined, and it was replaced by Llawhaden, possibly in the same period that saw the decline of Llandeilo Fawr.

Penally appears to have been an important site during a transitional phase of the cult. It was clearly a successful and powerful site in the ninth and tenth centuries, with local patronage.

⁸⁰ Redknapp & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 320-7.

⁸¹ T.M. Charles-Edwards, ‘The Seven Bishop-Houses of Dyfed’, *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 24.3 (1971), pp. 247-262.

⁸² Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 200.

The continued importance of the site is seen in the fact that the abbot of Penally signed two of the St Euddogwy charters from the *Book of Llandaf* and there was a local tradition that both St Teilo and St Dyfrig lived at the foundation at different times.⁸³ The persistence of the connection with St Teilo in local tradition suggests that when Llandaf began reculting, there was still an active memory of the association between the saint and Penally that could not be rewritten as Llandaf had done with Llandeilo Fawr.

Relics of the Cult of St Teilo

The relics of a saint gave prestige to a religious foundation. Most saints' cults in early medieval Wales had one or two relics, usually a bell or a book that was associated with the saint. In pre-Norman Wales it was uncommon for the cult of a saint to have had any corporeal relics of the saint. The cult of St Teilo seems to be unusual in that it not only had a traditional relic that was associated with St Teilo during his life, but also possessed a Gospel book that was given to Llandeilo Fawr, and possibly had possession of corporeal relics before the Norman conquest of Wales. There is also a relic of the saint found outside of Wales, in Brittany. This suggests that Llandeilo Fawr and the cult of St Teilo was highly successful institution in early medieval Wales.

The hagiography of St Teilo reveals two relics of the saint. The first of these was the bell which is described in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Teilo* as being given to St Teilo by the patriarch of Jerusalem.⁸⁴ Although few bells in Wales survive, many saints are associated with bells, including all of the saints already examined. Unusually for the Welsh hagiographical material, St Teilo receives his bell from the patriarch of Jerusalem, while the general trend seems to involve the gifting of the bell by another Welsh saint, very often St Gildas, as in the cases of SS. David, Cadog and Illtud. This suggests that the cult aspired to more prestigious connections than just within Wales itself. It is unlikely that Llandeilo Fawr invented the story of how St Teilo obtained the bell as the same story appears in the *Life of St David* which predates the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Teilo*. As already mentioned above, the story of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the relics that were brought back may have been based on an earlier piece of hagiography. The bell, and the other relics brought back by St David and St Padarn must have been relatively well known for them to have been included in

⁸³ Ibid., p. 200.

⁸⁴ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §8.

the Lives of all three saints. Doble proposes that the bell was transferred to Llandaf when it became the new principle St Teilo foundation, as the description of the bell in the hagiography is quite detailed, suggesting that Geoffrey had seen the bell in person.⁸⁵ The hagiography does indeed give a description of the bell: the fact that Geoffrey attempts to explain why the bell is small and plain supports the theory that he had seen the bell.⁸⁶ This further supports the idea that the bell was considered to be an important relic of the cult of St Teilo, if the bell was transported from Llandeilo Fawr in the south-west to Llandaf in the south-east. The bell was clearly held to be an important relic of St Teilo.

The existence of corporeal relics in Wales before the Norman conquest of Wales is very uncommon. There was no real practice in Wales of saving the body of the saint as there was on the Continent. However, there is evidence of a tradition of the preservation of St Teilo's body from before the Norman period, and another local tradition connected to the remains of the saint. The *Life of St Teilo* describes how three different foundations wanted to claim the body of the saint so God multiplied his remains so that each of the institutions could have a body.⁸⁷ As the surviving hagiography dates to the twelfth century it could be argued that this was simply an attempt to fabricate bodily remains that Llandaf could claim. However, if this were only a tradition invented in the twelfth century, it would make little sense for the body to have been split into three: Llandaf had been the principle St Teilo foundation from the early eleventh century, so only one body would be required. The three foundations are not named in the *Vespasian Life of St Teilo*, but a later Life suggests the three sites were Llandeilo Fawr, Penally and Llandaf.⁸⁸ As already discussed above and expanded below, Llandeilo Fawr lost its status as the principal St Teilo foundation at some time in the late ninth century or early tenth century. By the time the *Life of St Teilo* was composed by Geoffrey, Llandeilo Fawr had so little power that it could not prevent Llandaf becoming the new principal St Teilo foundation. It is unlikely, then, that Llandeilo Fawr could have the impetus to make new claims of being in possession of St Teilo's body in competition to the claims of Llandaf. If there was a tradition of Llandeilo Fawr owning corporeal relics of St Teilo it must have originated from a period when the foundation was still considered to be an important St Teilo house. This suggests that there was a tradition of the cult of St Teilo being in possession of the body of the saint from at least two centuries before the Norman invasion

⁸⁵ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 178.

⁸⁶ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §8.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, §18.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, §18.

of south Wales: a tradition that persisted for several centuries despite the move of the cult to Llandaf.

There is a second tradition associated with the skull of St Teilo which is connected to Llandeilo Lwydarth. A local tradition tells how a local maid attended St Teilo at his death and that he told her that a year after his death she should take his skull and bring it home with her where it would be a blessing for future generations.⁸⁹ The skull became known as Penglog Teilo, and was passed down by a local family. There was a tradition that drinking water from the nearby St Teilo's Well from the skull could heal the sick.⁹⁰ Only the skull cap remains of the original skull, and it is now kept at Llandaf. The authenticity of the skull is unknown as it has never been examined, but the size of the skull suggests that it was not that of a full grown male.⁹¹ Even though the authenticity of the skull is doubtful, it is significant to note that the legend connected the saint to Llandeilo Lwydarth, a site that, as has already been discussed, obviously had some early significance to the cult of St Teilo. The persistence of the tradition suggests a continuing importance of St Teilo in areas of south-west Wales even after the cult relocated to Llandaf in the east.

Baring-Gould and Fisher record another relic of St Teilo in Brittany, though little is known about it. In Guengat, Finistère in north-west France, the historic region of Cornouaille, there is a granite block that has been made into a seat called 'the Seat of St Dêlo'. Traditionally sitting on the block cured fever.⁹² It is possible that this relic could be associated with St Teilo. In Brittany the majority of dedications to St Teilo are found in Cornouaille, the same area in which Guengat is located.⁹³ St Teilo is supposed to have spent some time in Brittany during the yellow plague, and the presence of his relic there suggests the popularity and power of the cult of St Teilo in Brittany as well as in Wales.⁹⁴

The last relic associated with the cult of St Teilo is also the one which reveals the most about the evolution of the cult. The *Lichfield Gospels*, are not a relic of St Teilo himself but can be seen as a relic of the later cult of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr. It is the only surviving gospel book of its kind from early medieval Wales. The presence of the book at Llandeilo Fawr can be seen as an indication of the changing status of the cult of St Teilo in early medieval

⁸⁹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV, p. 239.

⁹⁰ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 200.

⁹¹ Baring-Gould & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. IV, p. 240.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁹³ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 203-5.

⁹⁴ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §9.

Wales.⁹⁵ The *Lichfield Gospels* were given to Llandeilo Fawr at some time in the early eighth century. The arrival and presence at Llandeilo Fawr of the gospel book reflects the high status of the foundation. It suggests that in this period Llandeilo Fawr had a patron powerful enough to own an illuminated gospel book and who could easily gift it to the foundation. This in turn would have given Llandeilo Fawr great prestige to have possessed such a high status object. The illuminations in the Gospels have been compared to many other contemporary gospel books like the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, the *Book of Kells*, the *Book of Durrow*, the *Book of Armagh*, the *Trier Gospel Book*, and the *Macdurnan Gospel Book*.⁹⁶ The foundations which owned these gospel books were all powerful institutions with great influence. If the *Lichfield Gospels* were of a comparable quality it is reasonable to assume that Llandeilo Fawr was of a similar high status to those institutions like Lindisfarne and Armagh who owned these gospel books. This suggests that at least in the eighth century Llandeilo Fawr was a powerful foundation with potentially the same kind of power and influence as some of the greatest institutions of the period.

The *Lichfield Gospels* record several grants made to ‘the altar of St Teilo’, which is assumed to be Llandeilo Fawr.⁹⁷ These grants are recorded in both Latin and Old Welsh in the margins of several pages of the Gospels and are identified as Chad1-8. Chad 1 records the gift of the Gospels to the altar of St Teilo and dates to the beginning of the eighth century. Chad 2 records a property dispute and is thought to be a copy of an eighth-century text. Chad 3 and 4 record gifts of land to St Teilo. Chad 5 records a grant of liberty for Bleiddud ap Sulien and his progeny. Chad 3, 4 and 5 are all witnessed by ‘Nobis’ who is recorded as being the bishop of St Davids in the *Annales Cambriae* in 840. Chad 5 records Nobis as ‘episcopus teliav’ which suggests that Chad 3-5 must have been written before Nobis left Llandeilo Fawr and became bishop of St Davids, suggesting a date in the early ninth century before 840. Chad 6 records the status of a farm and dates to the end of the ninth century or the beginning of the tenth century. Chad 7 records the grant of an unknown place and the date of this grant is uncertain, though probably made by at least the early tenth century. Chad 8 is a collection of names found on various pages throughout the *Gospels* with various dates.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Davies, ‘The Saints of South Wales’, p. 368.

⁹⁶ J.J.G. Alexander, *A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles Vol. I* (London, 1978), p. 49; D. Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Cardiff, 2000), p. 5; P. McGurk, *Latin Gospel Books from A.D. 400 to A.D. 800* (Amsterdam, 1961), p. 11.

⁹⁷ *Extracts from the Book of St Chad*, p. xliii; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 163.

⁹⁸ *Extracts from the Book of St Chad*, p. xliii-xlvi; W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1982), p. 202; Jenkins & Owen, ‘The Welsh Marginalia’, pp. 50-56.

The *Lichfield Gospels* marginalia reflect several important aspects of practices at Llandeilo Fawr from the eighth to tenth centuries. Primarily they demonstrate that throughout the period Llandeilo Fawr was in receipt of grants that were important enough to be recorded in a gospel book. Chad 3 and 4 are thought to refer to the area at the head of the Cothi Valley.⁹⁹ This is an area not in the vicinity of Llandeilo Fawr. This suggests that in the early ninth century grants that were considered important enough to be recorded in the Gospels concerned property that was from further afield than the area of Llandeilo Fawr. This in itself suggests two things: first that it was probable that by the early ninth century the community of St Teilo was already in possession of much of the land surrounding the foundation at Llandeilo Fawr; and that secondly, by this period the foundation had begun to expand its area of influence to the wider landscape of Ystrad Tywi.¹⁰⁰

The content of some of the marginalia is also important. Chad 2 describes how a dispute over land was settled by Llandeilo Fawr.¹⁰¹ This suggests that the religious foundation was an important part of the local community and had the authority to settle disputes. Similarly, the pairs of names that make up Chad 8 can be identified as people who swore oaths on the *Gospels* and their witnesses.¹⁰² This further supports the idea of Llandeilo Fawr having judicial powers within Ystrad Tywi. The power of Llandeilo Fawr did not only come from powerful patrons and possession of lands, as Chad 5 shows. Chad 5 invokes the curse of God and St Teilo on any who infringe on the rights of those recorded.¹⁰³ In many saints' Lives there are episodes recorded that show the power of the saint and the danger in crossing them. Here, Chad 5 demonstrates this was how people in Ystrad Tywi actually viewed St Teilo, and that the saint was someone to be respected and feared.

The presence of the *Lichfield Gospels* at Llandeilo Fawr reveals much about the status of the foundation from the eighth century to the tenth century. However, equally revealing was the removal of the gospel book from Llandeilo Fawr. The exact date that they were moved to Lichfield is uncertain but it was probably sometime in the mid tenth century.¹⁰⁴ Just as the arrival of the gospel book at Llandeilo Fawr showed that the foundation had increased in status, so the removal of them marked a period of the foundation's decline. The removal of

⁹⁹ W.A. Strange, 'The Rise and Fall of a Saint's Community: Llandeilo Fawr, 600-1200', *The Journal of Welsh Religious History* 2 (2002), p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁰¹ *Extracts from the Book of St Chad*, p. xliii.

¹⁰² Jenkins & Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia', p. 55.

¹⁰³ *Extracts from the Book of St Chad*, p. xlvi; *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁴ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 162; Jenkins & Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia', pp. 38, 49.

the gospel book reflects the removal of a status symbol for the cult of St Teilo, which would suggest the foundation was in a position of greatly diminished power. John Reuben Davies suggests that the removal of the gospel book ‘implies circumstances of a disastrous nature for the community of St Teilo in Ystrad Tywi’.¹⁰⁵ The *Lichfield Gospels* were a high status symbol and Llandeilo Fawr would not have easily given them up: some circumstance must have forced their hand.

The reason that the *Lichfield Gospels* were removed from Llandeilo Fawr in the tenth century is unknown. The removal poses the question: why were they taken from Llandeilo Fawr? In many ways the removal of the gospel book has been seen as being linked to the decline of the community at Llandeilo Fawr: the period of the decline of the cult of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr coincides with the period that the *Lichfield Gospels* were removed. It is uncertain whether the removal of the gospel book was a symptom of the decline of the cult or the cause of the decline: whether they were removed because of the diminishing status of Llandeilo Fawr or the removal was the trigger that began the process of decline.

The Cult of St Teilo in the Twelfth Century

The twelfth century marks a period of aggressive reculting for the cult of St Teilo. Llandaf was firmly the new principal St Teilo foundation in Wales and under the influence of Bishop Urban Llandaf began a campaign to completely rewrite the history of the cult of St Teilo, placing itself at the centre of the cult from the time of the saint. The best evidence for this campaign is the *Book of Llandaf*. It contains several saint’s Lives, charters and Papal Bulls which serve to create a prestigious new past for Llandaf that showed its episcopal status from the sixth century onwards. The twelfth century marks a second period of success for the cult of Teilo, as St Teilo gained prominence in a new Norman south Wales as one of the patron saints of Llandaf.

The *Life of St Teilo* in the *Book of Llandaf* is quite different to the version by Geoffrey found in *Vespasian A.XIV*. The author of the new version is unknown, but the composition was probably overseen by Urban.¹⁰⁶ The *Book of Llandaf* version is significantly longer, adding eight extra sections to the text. There are only minor changes to §1-8 but there are some

¹⁰⁵ Davies, ‘The Saints of South Wales’, p. 368.

¹⁰⁶ For the authorship of the *Book of Llandaf* see introduction.

Episode	Vespasian Axiv	Liber Landavensis
Praise for Teilo as an infant	§1	§1
Explanation of name Eliudd	§2	§2
Education under Dyfrig and then Paulinus	§3	§3
Conflict with Pictish ruler Bia	§4	§4
Taming of the stags and miracle of the book in the rain	§5	§5
Flourishing of the community	§6	§6
Angelic instruction to travel to Jerusalem	§7	§7
Journey to Jerusalem and return	§8	§8
Exodus of holy men from Wales due to plague	§9	§9
Teilo made head of Llandaf	-	
Journey through Cornwall	-	§10
Teilo's time in Dol with St Samson	-	§11
Teilo begged to stay at Dol after the end of the plague in Britain	-	§12
Teilo takes over the Episcopal seat at Dol	-	§13
Return to Cornwall	-	§14
Return to Wales	§9	§15
Disciples of Teilo	-	§16
Selection of miracle stories assigned to Teilo	-	§17
Division of the body of Teilo upon his death	§10	§18

Table 4. Episodes in the two Lives of St Teilo

major changes after this point. A large central section has been added to §9, mostly to add extra details to the events of the exodus of the saints of Wales during the yellow plague. The

following five sections, §10-14, as well as §16, §17 and §19 have all been added by the author of the *Book of Llandaf*, as Table 1 shows. §10-§14 detail St Teilo's journey to Cornwall and Brittany and his return to Wales after the plague was over. §16 is a description of the disciples who supported St Teilo at Llandaf and details his role as bishop. §17 recounts several miracle tales associated with St Teilo. §19-21 are a confirmation of the properties and privileges of St Teilo during his lifetime. There are also some notable additions to §18, which describes the multiplication of the body of St Teilo.¹⁰⁷

The most significant portion of additions appears in §10-14. As already mentioned these sections describe St Teilo's journey through Cornwall to Brittany where he stayed for seven years and seven months with St Samson before travelling back to Cornwall. It is not thought that these sections actually have any actual bearing on the life of St Teilo. The events described are found in the Breton *Life of St Turiau*. It is probable that the composer of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* had read the *Life of St Turiau* and had confused the two names, believing that St Turiau was actually St Teilo and erroneously added the extra details.¹⁰⁸ However, it may be that the composer of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* decided to add these sections for another reason. The episodes in Brittany tie St Teilo to St Samson, and in them St Teilo is asked by St Samson to take up the episcopal seat of Dol.¹⁰⁹

There are several miracle stories added towards the end of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* in §17. The section describes five miracles assigned to St Teilo: the first is a repeat of §5 in which three horses carry wood for the monks every day on their own; the second describes how a man, Distynnig, was brought back to life by the saint; the third describes the healing of a paralytic man; the fourth shows how a woman who transgressed against the saint was liquefied; and the final tale describes how a ruler named Gwaeddan violated the sanctuary of a church of St Teilo and as a result became mad.¹¹⁰ It is likely that each of these miracles were recorded from oral traditions gathered by the composer of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo*.¹¹¹ Several of the miracles are linked to the local landscape, suggesting that each came from an oral tradition passed down in those places. Distynnig is brought back to life on the banks of the river Cywyn, which may bear some relation to the St Teilo dedication at Llandeilo Abercywyn. Similarly, the paralytic man was healed at the church of Rath, which is

¹⁰⁷ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§1-19.

¹⁰⁸ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 117; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 183-5.

¹⁰⁹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §13

¹¹⁰ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §17.

¹¹¹ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 167, 191.

probably linked to the dedication at Amroth. Gwaeddán violated the sanctuary of Llandeilo Fechan, presumably a lost St Teilo dedication. It would be logical that these miracle stories were preserved in these areas, and were then written down by the composer of the Llandaf Life of St Teilo. This type of miracle story, that is usually so prevalent in other hagiography is notably absent from Geoffrey's version of the *Life of St Teilo*. The composer of the *Book of Llandaf* version clearly added these miracles to the text in order to show the power of the saint that was previously lacking, using a combination of miracles that showed the healing power of the saint as well as the dangers of crossing the saint.

The most obvious changes to the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* are the various added sections that weave Llandaf into the hagiography. The most overt of these is the added passage that states that St Teilo was consecrated to the church of Llandaf and its diocese.¹¹² There had been no mention of St Teilo being connected to Llandaf previously so this addition firmly changes the narrative by placing the saint at Llandaf, usurping Llandeilo Fawr as St Teilo's principal foundation. After the yellow plague the composer of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* has St Teilo returning to Llandaf for the rest of his life.¹¹³ This marks Llandaf as St Teilo's episcopal home: even after leaving to go to Brittany and Cornwall and all the intervening years, the place he returns to is Llandaf. The campaign to make Llandaf the principal site associated with St Teilo is rounded off with additions to the description of the saint's death. When the multiplication of the body is described the composer leaves the reader in no doubt that the 'real' body came to rest at Llandaf.¹¹⁴ Again Llandaf attempts to diminish the connection between St Teilo and Llandeilo Fawr: the composer has chosen to not include the name of the church, merely naming it as a place 'on the bank of the river Towy'.¹¹⁵ It is clear that Llandeilo Fawr is the place meant but the author omits the name to distance the saint from the site and promote the position of Llandaf instead. In this way the composer has used the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* to completely rewrite the narrative of the cult of St Teilo, firmly rooting it at Llandaf.¹¹⁶

In a similar way the composer has added small changes to alter the relationship between St Teilo and St David. As already shown the two saints and their cults had close ties. However, in the new narrative created by Llandaf the two saints are no longer friends and the composer

¹¹² *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §9.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, §15.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, §18.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, §18.

¹¹⁶ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 369; Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 118.

uses the hagiography to promote the idea of St Teilo's supremacy over St David. Some of these changes are small, like changing the word order so that St Teilo's name appears before St David's, but others are more obvious.¹¹⁷ When the saints are in Jerusalem they are all made bishops in the Vespasian version, but the Llandaf composer adds that St Teilo was to be the successor of Peter and St David the successor of James.¹¹⁸ While this bestows great prestige on both saints, it is clear that St Teilo is supposed to have been given the greater position as successor to the founder of the Church in Rome. This reflects the dispute between Bishop Urban and St Davids over which of the two institutions was the chief bishopric in Wales.

While the hagiography was used to downplay the relationship between St Teilo and St David, the composer also used it to create connections between St Teilo and a number of other minor saints of south Wales. The composer of the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* includes a list of the disciples attributed to St Dyfrig that followed St Teilo when he became the bishop of Llandaf. This list names eight saints, SS. Inabwy, Gwrfaed, Cynwr, Teulyddof, Iuhil, Ishmael, Tyfei and Euddogwy.¹¹⁹ Significantly, only two of those named were also named as disciples of St Dyfrig. All are found in the *Book of Llandaf* either in part of the hagiography, as a witness to a charter, or as the patron of a property claimed. St Inabwy and St Cynwr, who appears as 'Congur' in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, were both named as disciples of St Dyfrig in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*.¹²⁰ Both appear as witnesses to several charters. Cynwr was also the patron saint of Gŵyr at Bishopston, Capel Cynnor in Penbre, and Llangunnor. Gwrfaed was the patron of Llandeilo'r-fân. Teulyddog was the patron saint of Llandeulyddog, one of the seven bishop houses of Dyfed. Iuhil and Fidelis also appear as witnesses to several charters. Ishmael was one of the nephews of St Teilo, and was also the patron saint of St Ishmael's in Rhos, another of the seven bishop houses of Dyfed. St Tyfei was also a nephew of St Teilo and is murdered in one of the charters appended to the *Life of St Teilo*. He is also the patron saint of Llanffa in Glamorgan, Llandyfai in Pembrokeshire and Llandyfeisant in Carmarthenshire. Euddogwy is St Euddogwy, the third patron saint of Llandaf and another of St Teilo's nephews.¹²¹ Of all these sites Llandeilo'r-fân, Llandeulyddog, Gŵr, Llanffa and St Ishmaels, Rhos are all found in charters in the *Book of*

¹¹⁷ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §4.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, §8.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, §16.

¹²⁰ *Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15.

¹²¹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 87-8; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 188-90.

Llandaf. By making these saints disciples of St Teilo Llandaf was trying to legitimise its claims on these properties and also legitimise the charters in which several of them appear as witnesses. It is unlikely that these were genuine grants to Llandaf, especially in the case of Llandeulyddog which was one of the bishop houses of Dyfed.

All the sites dedicated to the saints listed as disciples St Teilo are shown in Map 10. As can be seen there is a clear south-west distribution of the dedications, with two main groupings. The most western group of dedications lies well beyond the control of Llandaf, and it is not surprising that none of these properties are found in any of the Llandaf charters. The properties in the central group are all located within or around Ystrad Tywi. Significantly, three of these properties, Llandeulyddog, St Ishmael's and Gŵr, were supposedly granted to Llandaf.¹²² It would seem unlikely that these would be genuinely granted to Llandaf as they are located well outside the boundaries of its control. Llandeulyddog and St Ishmael's are both granted in the charters to St Teilo. In this way Llandaf is once again using St Teilo to claim properties to which it would otherwise have no rights. Gŵr, however, is not granted to St Teilo. It is granted instead to Euddogwy.¹²³ Gŵr lies outside of Ystrad Tywei which may explain why it was not granted to St Teilo. It also suggests that the two properties that appear in charter 124 may represent actual grants made to the church of St Teilo when the cult was still centred at Llandeilo Fawr. St Ishmael's and Llandeulyddog may have had an actual relationship with Llandeilo Fawr. The composer of the *Book of Llandaf* may have tried to then use this relationship to create a new one between the St Ishmael's and Llandeulyddog and Llandaf.

The two other properties found in grants to Llandaf that relate to this list of disciples are Llandeilo'r-fân and Llampha. As already mentioned, Llandeilo'r-fân was the church of Gwrfaed. The site appears in a list of properties confirmed to Llandaf by Rhydderch ab Iestyn.¹²⁴ The site appears as 'Llanguarmet' rather than 'Llandeilo'r-fân' which suggests that the site may have been taken over by Llandaf and resulted as a St Teilo church. Llanffa was the church of Typhai and was granted to Cerenhir, bishop of Llandaf. There is little about this grant or the site itself to tie it to St Teilo. The only connection is the supposed fact that St Typhai was St Teilo's nephew. However, as this relationship is only referred to in the *Book of Llandaf*, and as there is no correlation between St Teilo and St Typhai dedications, it would

¹²² W.R. Rees, *The Liber Landavensis* (Landoverly, 1840), pp. 137, 229, 363.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

appear that this relationship is another fabrication of the monks at Llandaf to support their claims on certain properties in south Wales, like Llanffa.

Bishop Urban further used the *Book of Llandaf* to support his claims in the properties claimed in the charters included in the book and the claims Urban himself had confirmed by papal bulls. The charters appended to the *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* have already been discussed above. However, while some of the charters may not have had any historical authenticity in earlier periods, in the twelfth century when they were written into the *Book of Llandaf* it is clear that these were all being claimed by Urban as the property of Llandaf. This would include Llanarth, Llantillio Portholey, Llantilio Crosseny, Llandeilo Rwnws and Llanddowror from the main body of St Teilo charters;¹²⁵ Amroth, Brechfa, Cilrhedyn, Cheriton, Cronware, Lanion, Llandeilo Abercywyn, Llandeilo Llwydarth, Llandeulyddog, Llangwathan, Manorbier, Pendine, St Ishmael's in Rhos, Trefloyne, and Trelech from charter 124;¹²⁶ and Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Graban, Llandeilo'r-fân, Llanfihangel Tal-y Llyn, Llangoed, Llangors, and Llowes from a grant of Rhydderch ab Iestyn.¹²⁷ This amounts to a great number of properties, as can be seen in Map 11 mostly outside of the diocese of Llandaf, and many in areas traditionally controlled by St Davids.

The *Book of Llandaf* projects an image of Llandaf as a powerful institution with three prominent patron saints, controlling significant areas of land across south Wales, with the backing of Canterbury and the support of the pope in Rome. However, as previous scholars have noted, how powerful Llandaf actually was, and to what extent its control of south Wales was as absolute as Urban may have wished to portray is debatable. This is especially true of Llandaf's claims on the cult of St Teilo. The hagiography successfully managed to rewrite the history of the cult, making Llandaf St Teilo's principal monastery, but it could not completely erase the significance of Llandeilo Fawr or Penally as prominent St Teilo sites: both had to be included as sites that had claims to the corporeal relics of the saint. Penally must have retained enough of its own power after the cult was relocated to Llandaf as it is the one significant St Teilo dedication that is not included in either of the two lists of St Teilo properties granted to Llandaf. Instead they claim the property was granted to St Dyfrig which would supersede any claim in the name of St Teilo. This suggests that Llandaf did not have complete control of all the St Teilo foundations.

¹²⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§22-24, 26, 29.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, §25.

¹²⁷ Rees, *The Liber Landavensis*, pp. 519-23.

The Papal Bull of Calixtus II to Bishop Urban further reveals how tenuous Llandaf's claims on properties of the cult of St Teilo were. The Bull confirms Llandaf's right to the properties of Llandeilo Ferwallt, Caswell Chapel, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont, Llantilio Pertholey, Llantilio Crosseny and Llangoed.¹²⁸ Llantilio Crosseny and Llantilio Pertholey were both granted to St Teilo.¹²⁹ Caswell Chapel (Llandeilo Porthtulon) was granted to St Dyfrig and Llandeilo Ferwallt and Llandeilo Tal-y-bont were granted to St Euddogwy.¹³⁰ Llangoed was granted to Bishop Joseph of Llandaf by Rhydderch ab Iestyn.¹³¹ While the Bull shows papal support of Urban's claims it also shows that Llandaf was having trouble enforcing its claims on properties which were actually within its bishopric.

This problem was not just isolated to those properties found in this Bull. In the following century Llandaf was unable to maintain its claim on many of the properties included in the charters of the *Book of Llandaf*. Only thirteen of the twenty-seven St Teilo properties are mentioned in the century following the composition of the main body of the *Book of Llandaf*. Of these thirteen properties only six of them were still under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Llandaf, namely Llandeilo Ferwallt, Llanarth, Llantilio Crosseny, Llantilio Portholey, Trelech and Merthyr Mawr. Many of the more western sites, including Llandeilo Fawr and Penally had come under the jurisdiction of the bishop of St Davids.¹³² This suggests that Llandaf did not have a strong grip on all the St Teilo properties in south Wales that it claimed, and that its hold on those properties was to be short lived, undermining the image of Llandaf as the most important cult centre in Wales.

Conclusion

There were clearly several distinct phases in the development of the cult of St Teilo during the early medieval period. Llandeilo Fawr was the principal foundation of the cult of St Teilo at the beginning of the period. There is evidence of a foundation at the site from as early as the fifth century, when the first inscribed stone was erected. The early inscribed stones at Llandeilo Fawr not only show the early presence of the site but also show that the foundation had powerful patronage from a very early date. The gift of the *Lichfield Gospels* in the early

¹²⁸ Ibid., pp. 557-8.

¹²⁹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§23, 24.

¹³⁰ Rees, *The Liber Landavensis*, pp. 320, 382, 387.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 523.

¹³² Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 172-184.

eighth century shows the continuing success of the foundation in this period. The cult of St Teilo spread through south-west Wales. These dedications were not only found in Ystrad Tyfi, the area of the see of Llandeilo Fawr, but also in Dyfed. These dedications and the fact that there is evidence of bishops of Llandeilo Fawr later becoming bishops at St David's suggest that there was a close relationship between the two cults at this time. This may be why the Lives of SS. David, Teilo and Padarn all contain the same pilgrimage story: an early tradition developed by the monks of these foundations to demonstrate the relationship.

The second phase of the cult of St Teilo was one of decline. The *Lichfield Gospels* were removed from Llandeilo Fawr, possibly in the middle of the tenth century, marking a low point for the fortunes of the foundation. At some point the foundation was abandoned, probably due to the pressures of the expansion of Deheubarth. This move may initially have been to Penally, a theory supported by the appearance of inscribed stones at the foundation in this period and the fact that the site claimed one of the three bodies of St Teilo. The altar of St Teilo was finally moved to Llandaf in the late tenth or early eleventh century. This move saved the cult of St Teilo and also gave a new importance to Llandaf, making it the seat of a bishop with a powerful saint as its new patron.

By the end of the eleventh century the cult of St Teilo was firmly located at Llandaf. Under Bishop Urban at the beginning of the twelfth century the history of the cult was completely rewritten, placing Llandaf at the centre of the cult. The *Book of Llandaf* tries to tie St Teilo to SS. Dyfrig and Euddogwy, the other patron saints of Llandaf, to legitimise the position of the foundation. Privileges and charters were also used to try and show that Llandaf had held power since the time of the saints. Urban used the connections with the foundations dedicated to St Teilo in south-west Wales to claim lands and properties for the see of Llandaf, attempting to increase the power and wealth of the foundation. The receipt of papal confirmations and Bulls to ratify these claims should have put Llandaf in the position of the most powerful ecclesiastical foundation in Wales. However, the success of Urban's reinvented cult of St Teilo was short lived. Most of the properties that he claimed for Llandaf in south-west Wales seem to have been retained by St David's. Llandaf had successfully become a powerful foundation, but that power did not extend past the boundaries of Glamorgan and they never managed to claim dominance over St David's.

The Cult of St Dyfrig

St Dyfrig is thought to be one of the earliest Welsh saints. He was active in south-east Wales probably in the sixth century. His cult is now found at Llandaf, but this was not the main ecclesiastical site of any early cult of St Dyfrig, and was probably not connected to the saint during his lifetime.¹ The location of St Dyfrig's actual principal foundation is debated as there is little evidence of the original cult of the saint. There is also some question surrounding the period in which the cult moved to Llandaf.

There are three Lives of St Dyfrig and all three are from late in the period. The first appears in the early twelfth-century *Book of Llandaf*. The Life appears as part of a number of texts relating to St Dyfrig and Llandaf. The first is *De primo statu Landavensis ecclesiae* which describes the arrival of Christianity in Britain and the consecration of St Dyfrig as bishop over south Wales, including a charter detailing the privileges granted to Llandaf which is based on *Braint Teilo* which appears later.² This section is heavily based on the *Historia Brittonum* and the *Annales Cambriae*, with St Dyfrig imposed on the narrative.³ It is followed by a number of charters granting property to St Dyfrig. Wendy Davies dates these charters to the late sixth and early seventh centuries, except for the grant of St Maughan's which she give a later date of c.860.⁴ More recent analysis of the chronology of the Llandaf charters suggests that the sequence of charters relating to St Dyfrig belongs to the seventh century, possibly with the first dating to c.625 and the following sequence being spread over three generations.⁵ This would place the charters in a period after the time of St Dyfrig, who was thought to have been active in the sixth century. The *Vita Sancti Dubricii* proper follows the charters. The Life begins with Dyfrig's grandfather, King Peibio unsuccessfully attempting to have his daughter first drowned then burnt when he discovers that she is with child. She survives the ordeals and St Dyfrig is miraculously found with his mother on the pyre. The baby cures Peibio of a drooling malady and is then accepted into the family. When he is older he is sent to be educated and gains such a reputation for wisdom that many others gather to learn from him. An angel appears to St Dyfrig and tells him to found his church at a place

¹ B. Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig and the Lost Charters of Moccas (Mochros), Herefordshire', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 75 (2018), p. 14.

² J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 77.

³ G.H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), p. 61

⁴ W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979), pp. 92-5.

⁵ P. Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source* (Woodbridge, 2019), pp. 50-58

marked out by a white sow. St Dyfrig goes to the monastery of St Illtud, and while there he ordains St Samson and also performs a miracle to refill the cellar there with drink. The following episode describes how he saves a young girl, Ariannell, from an evil spirit inside her. Once she is healed she becomes a disciple of St Dyfrig. When St Dyfrig grows old he goes to live on Bardsey, where he is buried upon his death. The following three chapters describe the translation of the body of St Dyfrig to Llandaf in the twelfth century by Bishop Urban and the miracles which occurred because of it.⁶ This *Life* is very unlike most traditional hagiography as it does not act as a biography of St Dyfrig, but appears more as a collection of traditions about the saint that existed in the twelfth century.⁷

The second version of the *Life of St Dyfrig* appears in the late twelfth-century *MS Vespasian A. XIV* and is essentially the same as the *Book of Llandaf* version, with a few minor changes. There are approximately ninety-four differences between the two texts, which consist of spelling variations and the omission of single words or short phrases.⁸ The largest difference is that the introduction is expanded by two lines in the *Vespasian* version.⁹ It is not thought that the *Vespasian* version of the text is a copy of the *Book of Llandaf* version; rather that both versions were based on an earlier *Life* of the saint that was edited to produce the two texts.¹⁰ Due to the bad spelling preserved in the *Vespasian* version and the omission of occasional important words, the version of the *Life* preserved in the *Book of Llandaf* is the better version of the two.¹¹ In this chapter, references to ‘the *Life of St Dyfrig*’ will therefore be to the *Book of Llandaf* version of the text. Both texts are based on an earlier version of the *Life of St Dyfrig*, possibly taken from Moccas in the eleventh century. This means there may be some traditions of the earlier cult to St Dyfrig that are preserved in the text, but it remains more a reflection of the cult as it was in the twelfth century with little bearing on the early cult of St Dyfrig.

The third *Life of St Dyfrig* was also composed in the twelfth century. This *Life* is completely different from the two previous versions. It was the work of Benedict of Gloucester, composed between 1138 and 1200.¹² In it he combines the pseudo history of Geoffrey of

⁶ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*.

⁷ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 61, 65.

⁸ J.G. Evans & J. Rhys (eds.) *The Text of the Book of Llan Dav* (Oxford, 1893), pp. 359-60.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359, ll. 8-10.

¹⁰ Guy, ‘The *Life* of St Dyfrig’, p. 7.

¹¹ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 61; Guy, ‘The *Life* of St Dyfrig’, pp. 5-7.

¹² J.B. Smith, ‘Benedict of Gloucester’s *Vita Sancti Dubricii*: An Edition and Translation’, in *Arthurian Literature* XXIX (2012), p. 61.

Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* with an earlier *Life of St Dyfrig*.¹³ This third Life will be discussed further below.

There are a number of other sources for St Dyfrig in the early medieval period. The first reference to him is in the Breton *Vita I Sancti Samsonis* which was composed in the late seventh or early eighth century.¹⁴ He appears several times during the course of the Life. He first appears briefly at St Illtud's monastery where he ordains St Samson as deacon.¹⁵ His second appearance is during Lent when he went to stay at his own house on the same island where St Samson was living at St Peiro's monastery. While there he appoints St Samson as the cellarer to the monastery.¹⁶ Shortly after this St Peiro dies and St Dyfrig calls together all the brothers for a council to choose St Peiro's successor, who they decide should be St Samson.¹⁷ St Dyfrig's last appearance comes at a festival at the beginning of Lent when several clerics are being ordained. They cannot decide who the last of the bishops should be but an angel appears to St Dyfrig and tells him to make St Samson a high priest. St Dyfrig follows the angel's advice and ordains St Samson as bishop.¹⁸ In each of his appearances in the Life he is characterised by his role as an authority figure. He has the power to ordain St Samson as both deacon and bishop, to make St Samson the cellarer of someone else's monastery, and to call a council to decide who should be the abbot of a monastery that is not his own. This position of power is reflected in the fact that he is referred to as 'bishop' on a number of occasions.¹⁹ This suggests an overarching authority over the ecclesiastical institutions in the area of south Wales where St Samson was located, an authority that was not questioned and, indeed, seems expected from him.²⁰ Within the Life he is seven times called 'papa', a term later reserved for the papacy, suggesting that he is well respected and revered.²¹ It also suggests that he is an older figure in the Welsh Church. In the *Life of St Samson* St Dyfrig is given the same role that SS. Germanus and Lupus are given in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*: as the established, easily recognised, older holy man who gives legitimacy to the younger saint. It is significant that he is not introduced when he first appears: St Illtud in comparison has a very long introduction, detailing his skills, and a

¹³ Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁴ See Introduction for further discussion.

¹⁵ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §13.

¹⁶ Ibid., §33-34.

¹⁷ Ibid., §36.

¹⁸ Ibid., §43-44.

¹⁹ Ibid., §13, §33, §36

²⁰ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 57.

²¹ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §13, §34, §43, §44, §II. 7; Smith, 'Benedict', p. 55.

miracle story concerning his own death.²² The absence of any introduction for St Dyfrig suggests that he must have been such a well-known figure in seventh-century Brittany that he did not require any introduction.²³ The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* copies an episode from the *Life of St Samson* to emphasise St Dyfrig's superiority. This shows how Llandaf wanted to portray St Dyfrig in the twelfth century. However, St Dyfrig is not the main character of the *Life of St Samson*, and the Breton author can have had little motive to fabricate the position and role that St Dyfrig plays. This suggests that the *Life* reflects a genuine seventh-century view of St Dyfrig.

St Dyfrig appears in the *Annales Cambriae*, which records that 'bishop Dyfrig' died in 612. This date may not be accurate, as St Dyfrig is known to have been active in the mid-sixth century.²⁴ There is no other reference to St Dyfrig until the late eleventh century, as is often the case with Welsh saints. This represents a large time gap in the sources that are available for St Dyfrig. His next appearance is in Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* at the end of the eleventh century, where he meets with St David and St Deiniol at the synod of Brefi.²⁵

There have been a number of studies concerning St Dyfrig and his cult. Gilbert H. Doble provided an investigation of the hagiography and the charters associated with the saint.²⁶ However, his study of St Dyfrig was originally published in 1943 and there have been some new interpretations of the evidence since then. More recent scholarship has tended to focus on St Dyfrig and the *Book of Llandaf*. John Reuben Davies examines St Dyfrig's role in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* and his relationship with the charters associated with the saint. He argues that St Dyfrig's appearance in the *Life of St Samson* is not evidence of a cult of the saint, merely that there was a prominent bishop of that name in Wales in the period. He suggests that the saint's appearance in the eleventh-century *Life of St David* is the first real evidence of any cult to the saint and that the cult of St Dyfrig was superimposed on Ergyng by Llandaf no earlier than the second half of the eleventh century. Before this there is no evidence of any cult to St Dyfrig, or of any connection between the saint and Ergyng.²⁷ In contradiction to this, a recent study by Ben Guy suggests that the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* and the charters attached to it were based on material composed at Moccas, Ergyng

²² *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

²³ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 56.

²⁴ Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 52.

²⁵ *Vita Sancti David*, §50.

²⁶ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), pp. 56-86.

²⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 79-86.

and adapted for the benefit of Llandaf. The study suggests that the charters were not originally granted to St Dyfrig himself but to Moccas, the main site of the cult of St Dyfrig in Ergyng.²⁸ This would suggest that there was an early cult to St Dyfrig and that it was in Ergyng. Another recent study by Joshua Byron Smith, however, agrees with J.R. Davies that there was no connection of the cult to Ergyng and that there is no evidence of a cult existing before the eleventh century.²⁹ The main body of his research concerns the *Life of St Dyfrig* by Benedict of Gloucester and the context of its composition, which will be considered in more detail below. The questions of the early existence of the cult of St Dyfrig and its connection to Ergyng and Llandaf shall be addressed in this chapter.

It seems clear that there were different phases in the cult of St Dyfrig. Contrary to what J.R. Davies suggests, the *Life of St Samson* would seem to confirm that there was a cult to the saint in the early medieval period. More than just a prominent bishop, the Dyfrig who appears in this piece of hagiography is twice named as 'saint'.³⁰ The others that are termed as such are SS. Germanus and Illtud, two saints who had clearly attested cults in the early medieval period. It would be unusual for a saint to be so prominent and well known and to have not had a cult to him. There is evidence of the cults of many saints in Wales, many of whom are lost to us now. Those whose names and stories remain, like the saints this thesis addresses, had prominent cults. It suggests that in the early medieval period there would have been a cult to St Dyfrig. It is also clear that the cult of St Dyfrig did not survive in its original form to the end of the medieval period. The complete lack of dedications to St Dyfrig and his absence from any of the ninth-century Breton hagiography that refers in detail to south Wales suggests that the cult of St Dyfrig had been lost by at least the ninth century. The cult was then revived when he was made one of the patron saints of Llandaf. It is uncertain when or how St Dyfrig was rediscovered, but it seems likely to have been in the eleventh century during the episcopate of Bishop Herewald, c.1055-1104. Herefordshire was very vulnerable to Welsh incursions during this period. Gruffudd ap Llywelyn successfully sacked Hereford in 1055, leaving the area open for the Welsh. In the same period the see of Hereford was left empty: Bishop Æthelstan died in 1056 and his successor Bishop Leofgar was killed several weeks later, after which the seat of Hereford was left empty. This would be an ideal time for Bishop Herewald to expand the see of Glamorgan into areas of Herefordshire, such as

²⁸ Guy, 'The *Life* of St Dyfrig', pp. 1-37.

²⁹ Smith, 'Benedict', p. 58.

³⁰ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §34 & 43

Ergyng. He was clearly active in the area during the period, with records of him consecrating several churches.³¹ The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* and the charters that accompany it could have been discovered in Moccas by Herewald during this period. It is uncertain whether it is at this point or early in the episcopate of Bishop Urban that St Dyfrig was made a patron saint of Llandaf. Ergyng passed back into the hands of Hereford after the death of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn in 1063. The *Life of St David* does not name St Dyfrig as the bishop of Llandaf, but neither does it state that St Deiniol was the bishop of Bangor. Geoffrey of Monmouth changes the seat of St Dyfrig from Llandaf to Caerleon in his *Historia Regum Britanniae*, composed c. 1138. This suggests that the tradition of St Dyfrig being based at Llandaf cannot have been well established at this point, if Geoffrey felt confident enough to suggest that his *podum* was somewhere else. Brooke suggests that Geoffrey's intention was to mock the pretensions of Llandaf by changing their narrative.³² This suggests that the cult of St Dyfrig could have been moved to Llandaf quite late in the period and that there was an awareness that Llandaf had not previously been the seat of St Dyfrig. Urban's request to translate the relics of St Dyfrig in 1120 can then be seen as his attempt to confirm the relationship between the saint and Llandaf- an attempt which was not wholly successful if Geoffrey was mocking it two decades later. There are therefore two distinct phases of the cult of St Dyfrig, an early one between the sixth and ninth centuries, and a later one from the eleventh century onwards.

Relationships of the Cult of St Dyfrig

The Life of a saint often reveals key relationships that the saint reputedly had during his lifetime. Early sources provide evidence of some relationships that St Dyfrig and his cult had but these are limited and show more about the status and perception of St Dyfrig than about his relationships with others. Due to the fact that the main sources for St Dyfrig come from so late in the medieval period the relationships described in them may only reflect connections contrived by Llandaf in the twelfth century rather than any portrayal of traditional relationships held by the early cult. The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* includes key family members and disciples, but as the Life is so late their presence may show little about the early cult. However, Guy suggests that there are several key parts of the *Book of Llandaf Life of St*

³¹ C.N.L. Brooke, *The Church and the Welsh Border in the Central Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp. 10-11; J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 27-29.

³² Brooke, *The Church and the Welsh Border*, pp. 23-4.

Dyfrig that may reflect an earlier Life of the saint found at Moccas. The removal of interpolations and clear propaganda to benefit Llandaf leaves a story of a saint in Herefordshire who was the grandson of a ruler and the son of a woman with a local cult, who had a local following in the area of Ergyng and was known for healing a local girl.³³ These episodes may reflect some aspects of the relationships held by the early cult of St Dyfrig.

The hagiography introduces St Dyfrig's mother and grandfather in the first episode. His mother is Efrddyl and his grandfather is King Peibio. Notably, no father of the saint is mentioned here. This may have come from a desire to make Efrddyl appear more holy- the absence of any father distances the idea of conception from the sinful act and brings her closer in character to St Mary: this can also be seen in the way that the rape of St David's mother Non made her more holy than if she had participated willingly in intercourse.³⁴ The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* relates how King Peibio is furious when he finds that his daughter is pregnant and orders her to be drowned, but she keeps washing up on the shore, so he orders her to be burnt. The next morning, she is found at the centre of the pyre unharmed with her son St Dyfrig.³⁵ When the child is brought to King Peibio he is healed of a swallowing malady. Efrddyl clearly represents a local saint, and the miracle story of St Dyfrig may preserve a local tradition about her.³⁶ The name 'Efrddyl' is preserved in several place names within Ergyng. The charters in the *Book of Llandaf* record several places which contain her name: *Insula Ebrdil* in charter 76a; *Lann Emrdill Efrdil* in charter 159a; *Finnaun Efrdil* in charter 171b; and *Lann Ebrdil* in charter 192. Similarly, King Peibio is responsible for grants in charters 72a, 72b, 73a, 73b and 76a and is a witness to charter 75.³⁷ As both the Efrddyl and Peibio charters are connected to grants to Llandaf, it would have been important to establish a connection between the two and St Dyfrig. The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* is the first record of any relationship between St Dyfrig, Efrddyl and Peibio. St Dyfrig does not appear in relation to either of them in the early genealogies. The earliest genealogy to record the relationship is *Jesus College, Oxford, MS. 20*, a late fourteenth-century manuscript.³⁸ The lack of evidence for the connection between the three before the *Book of Llandaf* was composed makes the legitimacy of the relationship doubtful. St Dyfrig may well

³³ Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', p. 16.

³⁴ J. Cartwright, 'The cult of St Non: rape, sanctity and motherhood in Welsh and Breton hagiography' in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 200-203.

³⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §14.

³⁶ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 79.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79-80.

³⁸ P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966), pp. 41, 45.

have been the grandson of a local ruler and the son of a local saint, but whether they were Peibio and Efrddyl is uncertain.

The relationships of the early cult of St Dyfrig are often difficult to find in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*. However, there are some relationships which can be seen, and which are confirmed by descriptions of the saint in earlier hagiography. The most obvious of these is that between St Dyfrig and St Illtud. In the hagiography St Dyfrig makes St Illtud the abbot of Llanilltud Fawr and visits him during Lent.³⁹ The first episode where St Illtud is made the abbot of Llanilltud Fawr by St Dyfrig is clearly an interpolation by the compilers of the *Book of Llandaf*, designed to show the power of Llandaf over Llanilltud Fawr.⁴⁰ The second appearance of St Illtud in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* is part of a story about St Samson. This episode is also an interpolation by the compilers of the *Book of Llandaf*.⁴¹ However, in this second episode the compilers are highlighting the authority of St Dyfrig over St Samson not St Illtud. St Illtud appears almost as an accident because he is caught up in the story. In this way the real relationship between St Dyfrig, St Samson and St Illtud is preserved. The relationship is the same as it appears in the earlier *Life of St Samson*: St Dyfrig is an authority figure who visits monasteries to perform clerical duties like ordaining St Samson. So, while it does not reveal a relationship preserved from an earlier version of the *Life of St Dyfrig*, it does expose a connection between the two saints which has persisted over the centuries.

Another possible genuine relationship that St Dyfrig held is seen in the episode with Ariannell. In the hagiography she is brought to St Dyfrig by her father, Gwyddiendyfei, to get the saint to heal his daughter who is possessed by a demon. Ariannell is so grateful when she is healed that she becomes a follower of St Dyfrig.⁴² There are two charters (75 and 171b) which record rivers called Ariannell as part of descriptions of boundaries, both in Herefordshire.⁴³ The episode of the exorcism is not an interpolation and Guy suggests that it preserves a genuine local tradition of a holy man healing a young girl. The name may have been taken from one of the local rivers and applied to the story, but the episode does seem to

³⁹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §3.

⁴⁰ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 80.

⁴¹ Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', pp. 14-15.

⁴² *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §17.

⁴³ Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', p. 16.

preserve an early tradition of St Dyfrig healing a young girl who became his follower.⁴⁴ This is a fairly common type of motif found in hagiography.

The disciples of a saint can often show connections between the saints' cult and other local cults. The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* contains a list of twenty disciples of the saint who came to him to learn. These are Teilo, Samson, Ufelfyw, Merchwyn, Elwared, Gwnfyn, Cynwal, Arthfoddw, Cynwr, Arwystyl, Inabwy, Cynfran, Gwrfran, Aelhaearn, Iddne, Gwrddogwy, Gwernabwy, Ieuan, Aeddan and Cynfarch.⁴⁵ Of these Ufelfyw, Merchwyn, Elwared, Gwnfyn, Arwystyl, Inabwy, Cynfran, Gwrfran, Aelhaearn, Iddne, Gwrddogwy, Gwernabwy and Ieuan all appear as witnesses in several of the charters. Teilo, Ufelfyw, Arwystyl, Inabwy and Aeddan all appear as bishops of Llandaf who receive various grants. Merchwyn, Elwared, Gwnfyn are listed as the three monks who elect St Euddogwy as St Teilo's successor as bishop of Llandaf. Cynwal, Arthfoddw, Cynwr and Cynfarch are all eponyms of churches granted to Llandaf in charters.⁴⁶ All twenty are not contemporary with each other. This list in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* is the only place that they all appear together. It is widely acknowledged that the list has been fabricated by the composer of the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, with the names having been taken from various charters and made into followers of St Dyfrig to legitimise Llandaf's claims to certain properties, suggesting that there were no actual connections, either for the early cult or twelfth-century cult, between the cult of St Dyfrig and any of the disciples listed.⁴⁷

The traditional narrative of the growth and education of the saint is notably absent from the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*. This means there is no teacher or elder figure to add legitimacy to St Dyfrig's status in the traditional manner. Instead, legitimacy is bestowed on St Dyfrig by SS. Germanus and Lupus who ordain him as bishop of south Wales.⁴⁸ This does not occur in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* proper, but rather in *De primo statu Landavensis ecclesiae*. This part of the *Book of Llandaf* is heavily influenced by the work of Bede and the *Historia Britonum*. There is no authority for this material in this section or any relationship between SS. Dyfrig, Germanus and Lupus.⁴⁹ St Germanus is mentioned in the *Life of St Samson* as the teacher of Illtud, but is not mentioned in relation to St Dyfrig. As St

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 14-16.

⁴⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15.

⁴⁶ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 81-3; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 68-73; Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', p. 16.

⁴⁷ J. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 81.

⁴⁸ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §1.

⁴⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 77; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 61.

Dyfrig does appear several times in the *Life of St Samson* it would make sense that a connection with St Germanus would have been noted if it had been known in the seventh century. The absence supports the idea that the relationship between St Dyfrig and SS. Germanus and Lupus was created by the compilers of the *Book of Llandaf*. The suggestion is further supported by the fact that chronologically it would be impossible for St Dyfrig to have been made bishop by them during their visit to Britain in the first half of the fifth century and then have died as is recorded in the *Annales Cambriae* in c. 612. It is much more logical to suggest that the connection was an invention by Llandaf.⁵⁰

The relationship between a saint and local ruler is often very important for the cult of the saint. In the *Book of Llandaf* it is King Meurig who confirms the privileges and grants of St Dyfrig and Llandaf.⁵¹ This is most likely to be meant to refer to Meurig ap Tewdrig, the earliest ruler of Glywysing.⁵² This would ensure the superiority of Llandaf within Glywysing as their privileges would predate any other in the area of south-east Wales. It would supersede the rights of Llancarfan who also claimed a connection to the ruling family of Glywysing through the father of St Cadog. However, as this section granting privileges to St Dyfrig and Llandaf is copied from *Braint Teilo* it is unlikely that it has any historical basis. Rather than King Meurig giving the sureties that many early cults needed, here his figure has been used to give legitimacy to Llandaf to show that the earliest kings in the area supported them.

The late eleventh-century *Life of St David* also contain a reference to St Dyfrig that helps to show the relationship between SS. Dyfrig, David and Deiniol. In the episode SS. Dyfrig and Deiniol are sent to see St David to persuade him to come and talk at the synod of Brefi. The two are described as ‘the most holy men and the most faithful’ and only they are able to persuade St David to go to the synod.⁵³ It is thought that the three saints are meant to represent the three bishoprics of Wales.⁵⁴ St David will not listen to anyone except his perceived equals. However, the *Life of St David* is still quite late in the early medieval period so reflects more the perception of the status of St Dyfrig in the late eleventh century rather than the life of the saint or the period of the early cult. Rather, it shows that by the late

⁵⁰ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 61, 65; Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 52.

⁵¹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §2.

⁵² Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 77; Guy, ‘The Life of St Dyfrig’, pp. 9, 28.

⁵³ *Vita Sancti David*, §50.

⁵⁴ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 85; Smith, ‘Benedict’, p. 56.

eleventh century it was widely believed that St Dyfrig represented the bishopric of south-east Wales.

The Cult of St Dyfrig in the Landscape

The main ecclesiastical site associated with St Dyfrig is Llandaf, where he is the patron saint along with SS. Teilo and Euddogwy. The *Book of Llandaf* asserts that the see of Llandaf had existed from the earliest times in medieval Wales and that St Dyfrig was its first bishop. This reflects the reculting of St Dyfrig in the twelfth century. The original cult of St Dyfrig is much harder to identify, as is the period when it was moved to Llandaf. The majority of the evidence for the cult of St Dyfrig in the landscape comes from the *Book of Llandaf* making it difficult to establish any genuine traditions of the early cult.

The *Book of Llandaf* tells a history of Llandaf being founded by St Dyfrig.⁵⁵ This is now acknowledged to be a fabrication of the compilers of the *Book of Llandaf*. The origins of Llandaf are unknown, but while there is evidence that it was a monastic site from quite early in the medieval period, there is nothing to suggest that it had any connection to St Dyfrig or his cult. In the *Life of St Samson* St Dyfrig is referred to as bishop on several occasions, but Llandaf is never mentioned. Similarly, the much later *Life of St David* does not mention Llandaf in relation to St Dyfrig. Even in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, Llandaf is only mentioned at the end of the Life when the translation of the saint's body is being described.⁵⁶ The cult of St Dyfrig had certainly been moved to Llandaf by 1120 when his relics were moved there by Bishop Urban. Exactly when before this the cult was moved is uncertain. It is possible that it could have been during the episcopate of bishop Herewald who was active in the area of Ergyng where the *Book of Llandaf* claims St Dyfrig held the majority of his properties.⁵⁷ There is also a possibility that the cult was established at Llandaf during the time of bishop Urban who was the driving force behind the promotion of Llandaf.

With the previous saints' cults examined the presence of the cult is seen in the landscape surrounding their principal foundation in the other dedications named after them. St Dyfrig is unusual as he is an important saint who does not have any sites that preserve his name in or around south Wales. The only place that eponyms of St Dyfrig are preserved is in the *Book of*

⁵⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §1.

⁵⁶ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §19; Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', pp. 14-15.

⁵⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 85.

Llandaf. There are two sites mentioned that include ‘Dyfrig’ place names: Hennlann Dibric and Llan Guern Teliau ha Dibric, in charter 275.⁵⁸ ‘Henelann Dibric’ suggests a site that was an old church to St Dyfrig. The form of ‘Llan Guern Teliau ha Dibric’ suggests that this may have been a dedication to St Teilo with ‘ha Dibric’ added on to the end. However, both of these sites were consecrated by Bishop Herewald in the mid-eleventh century, so neither preserve a genuine dedication from the time of St Dyfrig.⁵⁹ This shows that there is nowhere in south Wales that preserves toponyms of the cult of St Dyfrig, suggesting that his cult was taken over quite early on by another more dominant saint’s cult which erased the traces of St Dyfrig’s name from the landscape.

There are a number of places that are named in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* in relation to the saint. The first is Madley where St Dyfrig was born and where his grandfather, King Peibio, ruled, according to the hagiography.⁶⁰ Madley lies to the north of Ergyng. The site is one of those granted to St Dyfrig and Llandaf in the list of charters preceding the Life proper (charter 76a). The second site named in the hagiography is Henlann, the place that St Dyfrig goes to in order to learn, and where he becomes a teacher.⁶¹ Henlann is Hentland, a site in Ergyng on the River Wye, near Ross, and possibly the site referred to above in charter 275. It is possible that this episode preserves a real tradition of a monastic school in the area of Ergyng, possibly at Hentland. This would fit in with the landscape of early Welsh monastic schools, as those at Llanlltud Fawr and Llancarfan.⁶² Another site described is that of Moccas. The *Life* describes how an angel appeared to St Dyfrig in a dream and told him to found a monastery at a place marked out by a white sow and its piglets.⁶³ A white sow appears in the foundation legends of several of the early Welsh saints, including in the Lives of SS. Paul Aurélian, Cadog and Brychan. This suggests that it was a fairly common motif found in medieval Welsh hagiography. The fact that it is used in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* to explain the origin of the place name ‘Moccas’ suggests that the story could preserve a topographical tradition that had existed in the area.⁶⁴ The story would suggest that the principal foundation of St Dyfrig was Moccas, as in other hagiography the site that is marked out by a vision or by an angel usually become the main site of the saint, as in the

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 84; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 67.

⁵⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 85.

⁶⁰ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §14.

⁶¹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15.

⁶² Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 67.

⁶³ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15.

⁶⁴ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 74.

cases of St Cadog and Llancarfan and St David and Menevia (St Davids). Moccas appears in an addendum to the *De primo statu Landavensis ecclesiae*:

The monastery of Moccas on the bank of the river Wye, where at an earlier time the blessed man Dyfrig had previously lived, was given by the gift and grant of King Meurig and his principal men to the church of Llandaf and its bishops in perpetuity, along with all its territory and all freedoms, free from every royal service in perpetuity, so that the former monastery might forever serve the latter.⁶⁵

This is not a grant to Llandaf, rather it appears to be in the same style as the confirmation of the privileges of Llandaf that precede it: the text confirms Llandaf's right to the site of Moccas and the privileges that come with it. This section shows clearly that Llandaf wished to emphasize its right to Moccas.⁶⁶ This occurs in several places in the *Book of Llandaf*, as when St Dyfrig is the one who makes St Illtud the abbot of Llanilltud Fawr.⁶⁷ It suggests that Moccas must have been a significant foundation in the period to make Llandaf feel the need to demonstrate in such a prominent way that Moccas was subject to it. The last significant site mentioned in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* is Bardsey Island. Bardsey is where St Dyfrig retires to and where his body was then buried.⁶⁸ The description of Bardsey in the *Life* is an interpolation copied from the *Life of St Elgar*.⁶⁹ It seems likely that the story is included to give an excuse for why the relics of the saint were not at Llandaf and to enable Bishop Urban to be allowed to translate the relics from Bardsey to Llandaf. The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* describes Bardsey as a place where 20,000 saints were buried, suggesting that the author was trying to indicate that it was a plausible place for St Dyfrig to have been buried. Bardsey is on the opposite side of Wales from where St Dyfrig was supposedly active, which makes it unlikely that there was a relationship between the island and the saint.

After the *De primo statu Landavensis ecclesiae* and preceding the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* there are several charters granted to St Dyfrig. The sites granted are Welsh Bicknor, Dorstone, Llandinabo, Valley Dore (Golden Valley, Herefordshire), St Maughan's, Pencoyd, Madley, Bishopston, Penally, Llandeilo Fawr and Llanddowror.⁷⁰ The last three of these sites are all from the same charter, 77, and it is a fabrication by the compilers of the *Book of*

⁶⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §4.

⁶⁶ Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', p. 17.

⁶⁷ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §1.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, §18.

⁶⁹ Guy, 'The Life of St Dyfrig', p. 15.

⁷⁰ Charters 72a, 72b, 73a, 73b, 74, 75, 76a, 76b and 77.

Llandaf to confirm Llandaf's rights to the centres of the cult of St Teilo.⁷¹ It is doubtful that these sites in Pembrokeshire would have been granted to St Dyfrig, and should be discounted. All the other sites are found in Herefordshire, in the area of Ergyng, except for Bishopston. Bishopston is in the Gower and seems to be an anomalous grant. The sites granted in Ergyng are grouped together within a small area enclosed by the Rivers Dore, Monnow and Wye.⁷² It is clear that they represent a group of related foundations. Guy argues that the Dyfrig charters may represent a genuine group of charters that belonged to a foundation in Ergyng, most likely Moccas, and that the list of charters was used as a source by the compilers of the *Book of Llandaf* to confirm its right to several properties in Ergyng.⁷³ If this is the case, then the charters represent a group of properties that were subject to Moccas in the early medieval period. It does not necessarily show that this group of churches was part of the cult of St Dyfrig, only that they were granted to a foundation that may have belonged to him.

This chapter has already established that Llandaf was clearly not the principal foundation of St Dyfrig, or the centre of the early cult of St Dyfrig. Several sites have been suggested as possible places where St Dyfrig had his foundation. Many important early medieval monasteries were schools, so Hentland has been suggested as the site that preserves the tradition of a monastic school.⁷⁴ W. Davies suggested that as the cult was centred in Ergyng then the cult centre may have been at one of the more important sites like Welsh Bicknor.⁷⁵ Moccas has already been discussed above as a major foundation in Ergyng. It is most likely the place from which the original St Dyfrig charters and an early *Life of St Dyfrig* originated.⁷⁶ The *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* preserves a traditional foundation story which suggests Moccas was the main foundation of the saint in the earlier version of the *Life* on which the *Book of Llandaf* version is based. Llandaf's obvious attempts to mark out Moccas as being subordinate to it also adds to the picture of it being an important site in Ergyng. However, as noted above, others argue that the connection between St Dyfrig and Ergyng is not credible. The only evidence that links the two is found in the *Book of Llandaf*, a document that is known to have been heavily doctored to support the interests of the bishopric of Llandaf. As discussed, J.R. Davies argues that there was no evidence of a cult of

⁷¹ See chapter on the cult of St Teilo.

⁷² Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 84; Davies, *The Llandaff Charters*, pp. 92-5; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, pp. 76-9.

⁷³ Guy, 'The *Life* of St Dyfrig', p. 6-17.

⁷⁴ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1956), p. 36.

⁷⁵ W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978), p. 145.

⁷⁶ Guy, 'The *Life* of St Dyfrig', p. 6, 17; Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 61.

the saint before the late eleventh century in the period that Llandaf was in the process of creating a cult of St Dyfrig at Llandaf.⁷⁷ This would mean that Llandaf was the first centre of the cult of St Dyfrig.

It seems clear that St Dyfrig was never associated with Llandaf during his life. The *Life of St Samson* suggests that St Dyfrig travelled around quite a lot: he was required at St Illtud's monastery to ordain St Samson and others, suggesting that he may have travelled between different monastic sites in order to perform the same duties across south Wales. He also goes to spend Lent on Ynys Pyr, most likely Caldey Island. It may be that St Dyfrig had multiple homes, as including his one on Caldey, in which he spent different times of the year in between travelling to perform his episcopal duties at the different ecclesiastical foundations in south Wales. St Dyfrig may not have had a principal foundation but it is clear that Moccas was connected to the saint and that it became an important monastic foundation. The genuine elements of an earlier *Life of St Dyfrig* preserved in the *Book of Llandaf* version and the St Dyfrig charters do suggest that there was a saint called St Dyfrig who was connected to Moccas, a site to which a number of other churches were granted in the late sixth and seventh centuries, as argued by Guy. These properties may have had connections to St Dyfrig during his lifetime, but any trace of a cult to the saint had disappeared by the end of the seventh century.⁷⁸ The only trace of the saint was then preserved in a *Life* and the charters granted to Moccas.

Relics of the Cult of St Dyfrig

St Dyfrig is unusual as he does not have any particular secondary relics associated with him. While bells, crosiers and books are often mentioned in association with a saint in the hagiography, there are no such items mentioned in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*. This may be because Llandaf was not in possession of any such relic and did not want to draw attention to the fact. The disappearance of the cult of St Dyfrig after the eighth century means that any relic that may have existed would probably have been lost by the time that St Dyfrig was re-culted by Llandaf.

There are no secondary relics described in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, but there are references to corporeal relics. The bones of St Dyfrig were removed from Bardsey Island and

⁷⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 86; Smith, 'Benedict', pp. 55, 58.

⁷⁸ Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm*, p. 145.

translated to Llandaf in 1120, a fact that is described in detail at the end of the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*.⁷⁹ Bardsey Island is discussed above along with the idea that it was only included to give Urban an excuse for why his relics were not at Llandaf-many of the Welsh saints' Lives contain similar themes to explain why a monastery does not have the bodily relics of their patron saint: St Cadog died in Beneventum; and St Illtud died in Dol. There is little evidence for the cult of corporeal relics through much of the early medieval period in Wales, but evidence for it begins to appear in the twelfth century.⁸⁰ Llandaf is one of the few sites to claim possession of corporeal relics. More unusually, Llandaf is the only foundation to have claimed to possess the relics of multiple saints. It suggests that Urban requested the bones of St Dyfrig from Bardsey to not only further solidify Llandaf's claims to the cult of St Dyfrig, but to also make the cult seem more legitimate in the eyes of his Norman neighbours by having the ability to show corporeal relics in keeping with the trends of the Church on the Continent.

Cult of St Dyfrig in the mid-twelfth century

Another phase of the cult of St Dyfrig can be seen in the *Life of St Dyfrig* that was composed by Benedict of Gloucester. This third Life of the saint reflects the cult of St Dyfrig in the mid-twelfth century, after the time of Urban and his campaign to promote Llandaf and the cult of St Dyfrig.

Benedict was monk at Gloucester during the twelfth century. His *Life of St Dyfrig* attempts to fit St Dyfrig into the history of Britain by combining the earlier *Life of St Dyfrig* with Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Benedict composed his *Life of St Dyfrig* some time after Geoffrey wrote his *Historia Regum Britanniae* in 1138 and some time before the production of MS Cotton Vespasian Axiv at the end of the twelfth century, as Benedict's *Life of St Dyfrig* appears in the manuscript. This suggests that his *Life of St Dyfrig* was composed between 1138 and 1200. Smith suggests that Benedict composed his *Life of St Dyfrig* during the episcopate of Nicholas ap Gwrgan, Bishop of Llandaf, who had previously been a monk at Gloucester. This would place the composition between 1148 and 1183. However, the fact that the two may have known each other does not necessarily mean that Benedict composed the Life for Bishop Nicholas. The text makes St Dyfrig the bishop of

⁷⁹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §19.

⁸⁰ A. Evans, 'The Levitating Altar of St Illtud', *Folklore* 122.1 (2011), p. 59.

	<i>Book of Llandaf</i>	Benedict of Gloucester
Introduction of Benedict of Gloucester		Prologue
Pelagian heresy wiped out by SS. Germanus and Lupus who make Dyfrig bishop/archbishop	§1	§6
Lands and privileges of Llandaf	§2	-
St Dyfrig makes Deiniol bishop of Bangor and Illtud abbot of LlanIlltud Fawr	§3	
Land grants	§4-13	
King Peibio drowns his pregnant daughter Efrddyl but she washes ashore	§14	§1
Efrddyl is burned but survives and gives birth to St Dyfrig		§2
St Dyfrig cures Peibio		§3
St Dyfrig attracts many followers and founds site at Hentlan	§15	§4
Praise of St Dyfrig	§16	§5
Ambrosius Aurelius makes St Dyfrig archbishop of Caerleon and St Samson archbishop of York	-	§7
Ambrosius and son, Uther, die and St Dyfrig crowns Arthur king		§8
Praise of Arthur and conflicts with the Saxons		§9
Battles with the Saxons		§10
St Dyfrig gives speech to troops		§11
Preparation for battle		§12
Victories of Arthur		§13
St Dyfrig visits the monastery of St Illtud every Lent		§14
Ordination of St Samson by Dyfrig	§16	-
Empty cellar miraculously refilled		§15
St Dyfrig frees a young girl from an evil spirit and she becomes his follower	§17	§16
Marriage of Arthur	-	§17

Crowning of Arthur		§18
Becomes a hermit and is succeeded by St David		§19
Strife for Arthur once St Dyfrig no longer archbishop		§20
Goes to live on Bardsey in old age	§18	§21
Buried on Bardsey	§19	§22
Description of Bardsey	-	§23
Postscript by Benedict of Gloucester		§24
Translation of body from Bardsey to Llandaf	§20	§25
Miracles which occurred due to the corporeal relics	§21	§26
Rebuilding of the church at Llandaf	§22	-

Table 5. Episodes in the two Lives of St Dyfrig

Caerleon, following Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, rather than Llandaf, which would suggest that the primary purpose of the text was not to promote Llandaf, as it would have been if it had been composed for Bishop Nicholas.⁸¹ The date of composition would therefore be some point between 1138 and 1200.

As already mentioned, Benedict's *Life of St Dyfrig* is a combination of an earlier Life of the saint and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. The text consists of a prologue and twenty-six chapters, making it considerably longer than the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, which is twenty-one chapters long, ten of which are charters.⁸² The text roughly follows the same pattern as the earlier *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*. Benedict's version begins in much the same way as the *Book of Llandaf* version, with the pregnancy of Efrddyl and her father's anger and attempts to have her killed. This culminates in the birth of St Dyfrig and his healing of King Peibio. This whole sequence is drawn out and embellished in Benedict's version, taking up three chapters of the text. The texts continue to run parallel as they describe St Dyfrig's growth, education and the foundation of Mochros or Moccas. It is at this point the two texts begin to diverge. The next episode tells the story of Germanus and Lupus coming to Britain to dispel Pelagianism. This is based on the section that appears

⁸¹ Benedict of Gloucester, *Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §7

⁸² See Table. 1 for full comparison of the structure of the two Lives of St Dyfrig.

in *De primo statu Landavensis ecclesiae*, at the beginning of the *Book of Llandaf* text, giving the same story of Germanus and Lupus coming to Britain but putting it in a more chronological position in St Dyfrig's life. The episode is also heavily based on the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. The following seven episodes are also drawn from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, but with no reference to any of the material from the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*. Indeed, §9-13 contain no mention of St Dyfrig at all and concentrate solely on the pseudo history of Arthur created by Geoffrey. Benedict then returns to the story of St Dyfrig at the point where he deviated, detailing the story of St Dyfrig's time at the monastery of St Illtud and the ordination of St Samson. The healing of Ariannell appears here, though she is not named by Benedict. Benedict again deviates from telling the story of St Dyfrig and continues to tell the story of the marriage and crowning of Arthur, taken from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. The following chapters, §19-24, are a combination of the text of the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* and the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. They follow St Dyfrig leaving to live on Bardsey in his old age with added details about who succeeded St Dyfrig and the condition of Britain in St Dyfrig's absence. Benedict closes his *Life of St Dyfrig* with his own epilogue, reflecting his prologue. This is followed by the story of the translation of the body of St Dyfrig to Llandaf and the miracles that occurred, taken from the *Book of Llandaf* version of the text.

Benedict's *Life of St Dyfrig* reveals several important things about the cult of St Dyfrig in the mid-twelfth century. The most obvious of these is highlighted by Benedict himself in his prologue: that his aim in writing the *Life* was to promote St Dyfrig because he thought such a great saint should not be so unknown.⁸³ This means that despite Urban's attempts to promote the cult of St Dyfrig and Llandaf during the early twelfth century the saint was still relatively unknown in England several decades later.⁸⁴

Conclusion

Little is known about the early cult of St Dyfrig. He was clearly considered to be an important figure in the late seventh century, as is shown by his portrayal in the *Life of St Samson*. The prominent position given to St Dyfrig in this *Life* suggests that there would have been a cult to the saint in this period in south Wales. It is probable that the principal

⁸³ Benedict of Gloucester, *Vita Sancti Dubricii*, § Prologue.

⁸⁴ J.B. Smith, 'Benedict', p. 60.

foundation of this early cult was Moccas, and it is also likely that the monks of Llandaf based their Life of the saint on a version which originated from here. A number of the charters associated with St Dyfrig in the *Book of Llandaf* may also have originated from Moccas. These charters show that there were grants being made to Moccas in the seventh and ninth centuries. This suggests the possibility of an active cult of St Dyfrig in Ergyng at least until the ninth century.

The lack of sources means that it is not possible to say with any certainty what happened to the cult of St Dyfrig in Ergyng after the ninth century. In the eleventh century St Dyfrig was reculted at Llandaf by Bishop Herewald. This suggests that there was not a very strong cult to the saint in Ergyng any more, as the saint was so easily adopted by Llandaf. Bishop Urban used the *Life of St Dyfrig* to further try and legitimise the position of Llandaf as the seat of the bishops of Glamorgan by suggesting there had been a bishop at the foundation since the sixth century. The translation of the corporeal relics of St Dyfrig to Llandaf by Bishop Urban was a further step to try to promote the cult of St Dyfrig at the foundation. However, it would seem that this promotion of the saint was not entirely successful. When Benedict of Gloucester composed his *Life of St Dyfrig* in the second half of the twelfth century, he openly states that St Dyfrig was not a well known saint. This suggests that the work of Bishop Urban to promote the cult of St Dyfrig was not as successful as the *Book of Llandaf* claimed.

The Cults of South Wales

There is evidence that there were many saints' cults in south Wales in the early medieval period. Between their genesis in the sixth and seventh centuries and the twelfth century most of these cults were lost or absorbed into larger cults. By the twelfth century there were four major cult centres in south Wales: the cult of St Cadog at Llancarfan; the cult of St Illtud at Llanilltud Fawr; the cult of SS. Dyfrig, Teilo and Euddogwy at Llandaf; and the cult of St David at St Davids. Each of these cults, except that of St David¹, have been examined in this thesis. A comparison of all these cults can provide a view of how saints' cults and the ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales developed between the sixth and twelfth centuries.

Each of the major cults of south Wales represent a different aspect of cult evolution. The cult of St Cadog had an early foundation, but remained minor until later in the period when it spread over much of Glamorgan, becoming a major institution by the eleventh century, with an important monastic school at Llancarfan. The cult of St Illtud evolved in a mirror image to that of St Cadog. It enjoyed great importance in the beginning of the period and Llanilltud Fawr maintained its position as a major foundation through much of the period, but began to decline in importance from the eleventh century. The cults of SS. Teilo and Dyfrig are both examples of Llandaf's program of reculting. The cult of St Teilo was initially very successful at Llandeilo Fawr, but declined due to political upheaval and subsequently moved to another location in order to prevent the cult from disappearing. Llandaf adopted the cult and subsequently wrote history of the saint and the cult in their own favour. There is evidence of the cult of St Dyfrig in the seventh century, but there is no extant evidence of it until it was taken up again by Llandaf in the eleventh century which invented an entirely alternative history for the cult. The cult at St Davids gained a high status by the seventh century and the church remained a major foundation throughout the period, growing even stronger with the rise of the kingdom of Deheubarth. Each of these shows a different development through the early medieval period, but each survived into the twelfth century. Considered together, these cults can show what influenced the character of the ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales during this period.

¹ St David has not been examined due to the extensive recent research on the saint. See Introduction for further details.

Relationships of the cults of south Wales

As has already been established, relationships were important for a saint's cult. These relationships provided a cult with patronage, protection, privileges and legitimacy, and were used to support property claims. Foundations cultivated relationships between their cults, local rulers, and other saints. There are some similarities in the ways different cults achieved this but some important differences as well.

Privileges, protections and patronage are all closely linked. Privileges and protections ensured the freedoms of the foundations within a particular cult.² Their importance is clearly seen in the late eleventh century in the respective *Lives* of SS. David and Cadog. These *Lives* contain many mentions of properties that belong to them or incidents with local rulers in order to highlight the privileges granted to them and their principal foundations.

Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David* refers to a list of twelve monasteries that St David supposedly founded in both England and Wales.³ The *Life* also contains incidents with a local ruler Baia and his wife, who grant St David and his disciples the rights to *Vallis Rosina*, and who God smites when they both break their oaths and threaten St David.⁴ Several similar incidents appear in the *Life of St Cadog*. St Cadog has confrontations with Paul Penychen, Brychan, Maelgwn Gwynedd, King Rhun and Arthur, all of which result in the confirmation of his rights to land and properties.⁵ These episodes were to ensure that St Davids and Llancarfan would retain guarantees of their privileges, powers and immunities.⁶

The hagiography seems to suggest that the importance of these privileges declined in the period after the Norman conquest of south Wales. The mid-twelfth-century *Life of St Cadog* by Caradog of Llancarfan only includes the episodes with Paul Penychen and Arthur, omitting all the other episodes involving rulers from Lifris' version.⁷ He also omits most of the references to places and properties of Llancarfan. Wendy Davies suggests that this omission shows that Llancarfan's interest in property rights and privileges had disappeared.⁸

² W. Davies, 'Property rights and property claims in Welsh "Vitae" of the eleventh century' *Hagiographie, cultures et sociétés, IV^e-XII^e siècles, Études Augustiniennes* (Paris, 1981), pp. 515-33; J. Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', in H.N. Savory (ed.) *Glamorgan County History II* (Cardiff, 1984), p. 386.

³ *Vita Sancti David*, §13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, §§16-19.

⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§8, 11, 22, 23, 24, 25.

⁶ Davies, 'Property rights', pp. 520-22.

⁷ Caradoc, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§9, 22.

⁸ Davies, 'Property rights', pp. 522-3.

These differences between the earlier and later Lives can be seen as a direct result of the Norman expansion into south Wales: in the time of Rhygyfarch and Lifris privileges and property rights were important to ensure a foundation was protected against internal fluctuations within the Welsh political landscape; in Caradog's period the Normans had gained control of much of south Wales and those foundations were mostly under the control and protection, of foundations in England as with Llancarfan and St. Peter's, Gloucester.⁹ However, while Caradog does greatly reduce the focus on privileges seen in Lifris' *Life of St Cadog*, it would be a mistake to assume that ecclesiastical foundations in twelfth-century south Wales were any less concerned with property rights. As has already been discussed, Caradog's *Life of St Cadog* does greatly reduce the number of incidents that involve conflicts with rulers which result in the granting of lands and privileges, but he still includes several references to property, even introducing an episode about St Cadog building a monastery on the banks of the River Neath and another describing all the lands ruled over by the saint, and by extension Llancarfan.¹⁰ Likewise, the *Life of St Illtud* only contains four episodes with incidents of conflict with rulers, but the hagiographer ensures that the Life includes the rights and privileges to the area of Llanilltud Fawr.¹¹ The *Book of Llandaf* is nearly entirely concerned with property rights and privileges. *Braint Teilo*, *De primo statu Landauensis ecclesie*, and the charters attached to the Lives of SS. Dyfrig, Teilo and Euddogwy are all integral parts of the *Book of Llandaf*, and all deal with the rights, privileges and properties of Llandaf.¹² This suggests that in the twelfth century the emphasis on property in Welsh hagiography was still important. Llancarfan may have been essentially owned by Gloucester, but Caradog still takes pains to highlight the lands and properties that belonged to Llancarfan.

It may be that foundations that had been given to other Norman institutions, like Llancarfan and Llanilltud Fawr, no longer had the problem of ensuring that different Welsh rulers respected their property rights and freedoms, but they still had to contend with local Norman lords breaking up their estates and encroaching on their properties. Lifris had to include so many incidents with rulers to highlight that all the areas of Wales had granted Llancarfan privileges: Paul Penychen guaranteed the lands of Llancarfan itself; Meurig, meant to represent Meurig ap Tewdrig, king of Morgannwg, becomes St Cadog's cousin for the rest of

⁹ H.D. Emanuel, *The Latin Life of St Cadoc: A Textual and Lexicographical Study* (MA Thesis, University of Wales, 1950), pp. lix-lxi.

¹⁰ Caradoc, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§13, 16.

¹¹ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§8-10, 17, 18, 21.

¹² *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §§2-3, 4-13; *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§19-21, 22-29.

the kingdom of Glamorgan¹³; Brychan ensured safety from the kingdom of Brycheiniog to the north; Maelgwn Gwynedd and his son Rhun ensured protection from the dynasty of Gwynedd, who in the period Lifris was writing was often also the dynasty of Dyfed through the branch of Cadell ap Rhodri; and Arthur covered protections from the rest of Britain. Caradog included Paul Penychen in his version, to protect the rights of Llancarfan, but as the dynasties of Glamorgan and Brycheiniog were effectively no longer ruling the areas, he did not need to include those episodes of conflict. Instead, Caradog highlights the lands that St Cadog himself ruled over in his own right in an attempt to protect Llancarfan's properties from the new rulers replacing the old kingdoms. Parts of *Braint Teilo* have been seen as a direct response to the threats posed by Norman lords in Wales like Robert of Gloucester.¹⁴ A similar case can be seen for Llancarfan: the *Life of St Gwynllyw* was composed to support Gloucester's claims to the church of St Gwynllyw, a church that should have been a church of the cult of St Cadog, against the lord of Newport.¹⁵ Privileges and property claims were, then, just as important in the twelfth century as they had been in the tenth century to the major monastic foundations of south Wales: they had once protected the cults' properties from internal conflicts between Welsh rulers, and had evolved to try and protect them from the claims of incumbent Norman lords.

Privileges and patronage are often related. Those that appear in hagiography as awarding privileges and guarantees to a foundation in the time of the saint are often those whose dynasties are connected to the foundation when the hagiography was written. The patronage of those in power seems to have been essential for the success of a saint's cult. Of the few cults that survived into the twelfth century nearly all show evidence of having rulers as patrons. Burials at Llanilltud Fawr in the ninth and tenth centuries show the connection between the cult of St Illtud and the ruling dynasty of Glamorgan.¹⁶ The same dynasty gave patronage to the cult of St Cadog. The Llancarfan Charters record several grants from Meurig ap Tewdrig and Morgan ap Arthwys in the seventh century.¹⁷ The success of the cult of St David directly correlates with the success of the kingdom of Deheubarth. As the kingdom

¹³ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §25.

¹⁴ J.R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 68, 79; W. Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979), p. 19.

¹⁵ J. Knight, 'Society and Religion in the Early Middle Ages', in M. Aldhouse-Green & R. Howell (eds.), *The Gwent County History I* (Cardiff, 2004), pp. 278-9.

¹⁶ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064* (Oxford, 2013) p. 601; J.R. Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales and the Welsh Church', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.) *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 384; J. Knight, 'Sources for the Early History of Morgannwg', p. 365.

¹⁷ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§ 62, 64, 65, 67, 68; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 272-3.

grew in the ninth century, the cult of St David expanded and gained power as it was promoted by the rulers of Deheubarth.¹⁸ In contrast, the cult of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr began to decline in the same period. As the kingdom of Deheubarth spread into Ystrad Tywi, the area of the cult of St Teilo, the elimination of the local rulers who had supported Llandeilo Fawr, and the promotion of the cult of St David over existing cults in the area led to the deterioration of the cult of St Teilo. By the beginning of the eleventh century circumstances in Ystrad Tywi were such that the cult of St Teilo relocated to Llandaf.¹⁹ The effective patronage of the cult of St David ensured its success, while the loss of patronage for the cult of St Teilo led to its decline.

Relationships with powerful rulers were not just important in terms of patronage. The principal foundations of the saints' cults of Wales each curated familial relationships between their saints and powerful historical rulers. Part of this was for the purpose of trying to ensure the patronage and protection of the cult, as has been seen with the creation of the relationship between St Cadog and Meurig ap Tewdrig and his descendants by Lifris. He also used St Cadog to create connections with the eponymous rulers of Gwynlliog, Glywysing and Brycheiniog through the saint's father and grandfathers.²⁰ This effectively linked St Cadog to all the kingdoms of south-east Wales. The relationship created between St David and Ceredig, the eponymous ruler of Ceredigion may have had a similar motivation. Ceredig appears as the grandfather of St David in the *Life of St David*.²¹ The cult of St David was based in Dyfed rather than Ceredigion, with only a few outlying dedications in the area. The reason for the creation of the relationship between St David and Ceredig may be because in the period that Rhygyfarch was composing his *Life of St David* Rhys ap Tewdwr was the ruler of Deheubarth, and he was descended from the line of Ceredigion.²² The other main reason for the creation and promotion of these relationships in the hagiography and genealogies was to give greater status to the saint, and therefore his cult. Appended to the *Life of St Cadog*, probably some time in the mid-twelfth century, is a detailed genealogy of the

¹⁸ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 386; H. James, 'The geography of the cult of St David: a study of dedication patterns in the medieval diocese', in J.W. Evans, and J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 41.

¹⁹ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 17; N. Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales Vol II* (Cardiff, 2007), p. 9.

²⁰ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, Preface.

²¹ *Vita Sancti David*, §2

²² Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 389.

saint.²³ In it St Cadog is connected to early Irish kings through the line of his mother and to Maxen Wledig and the Roman emperors through his father's line. Maxen Wledig was claimed as the ancestor of all the kingdoms of south Wales, showing Llancarfan was trying to create for St Cadog the same ancestry as the rulers of the main kingdoms.²⁴ Notably, the genealogies of all of the saints examined, except St Dyfrig, connect them to the early ruler Cunedda Wledig, the founder of the second dynasty of Gwynedd.²⁵ This was not unusual: in *Bonedd y Saint*, a compilation of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, the first eleven genealogies claim descent from Cunedda.²⁶ This highlights the fact that in the twelfth century members of a number of saints' cults in Wales were promoting the idea that their saints were descended from proto-kings. That all the major cults in south Wales in the period claimed this ancestry shows that a royal lineage was important to successfully creating a high-status saint's cult. The use of the male line of lineage to promote this royal status also suggests that political connections were considered to be the most important relationship a saint could have. While some saints, such as SS. Cadog and David, did have prominent family members who were also saints, others did not. The family of St Illtud, for example, was entirely fabricated in the twelfth century by the composer of his Life, and the only family attributed to the saint were chosen specifically to provide a connection to Arthur, and through him the line of Cunedda. This suggests that in Wales in the twelfth century a saint's status was largely measured by his political standing.

Through the hagiography, the principal foundations of saints' cults also cultivated relationships between their saints and local saints. Relationships with other saints were clearly important and were claimed through connections with family members, teachers and disciples. Many saints' cults claimed that parents and close family members were saints. Unlike with the familial political relationships that were promoted by religious foundations, these relationships were not tied to status. Instead, they reflect possible authentic relationships between saints (but more likely genuine early relationships between the cults of those saints rather than the actual saints themselves), and manufactured relationships used to legitimise claims over properties of other small local cults that were absorbed by the main

²³ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§45-7; H.D. Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', *National Library of Wales Journal* 7.3 (1952), p 220; B. Guy, *An Introduction to Medieval Welsh Genealogy* (Woodbridge, 2020), p. 81.

²⁴ B.F. Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledig* (Dublin, 2005), pp. xliii-xlix.

²⁵ *Bonedd yr Arwyr*, §29; *Bonedd y Saint*, §§1, 5; Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §47; *Vita Sancti David*, §68.

²⁶ *Bonedd y Saint*, §§1-11; B. Lewis, 'Bonedd y Saint, Brenhinedd y Saesson, and Historical Scholarship at Valle Crucis Abbey', in B. Guy, G. Henley, O. W. Jones & R. Thomas (eds.), *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the Welsh March* (Turnhout, 2020), pp. 139-54.

cults.²⁷ The relationship between St David and his mother, St Non, probably reflects an early tradition. It is unlikely that 'Non', or 'little nun' was the actual name of St David's mother.²⁸ However, the cult of St Non is clearly evident in south Wales and in Brittany, with dedications in both countries that occur in tandem with dedications to St David.²⁹ The proximity of the Chapel of St Non to St Davids suggests that the relationship between the two was established quite early in the period.

St Teilo has a number of close relations who were also saints. According to the *Book of Llandaf* St Tyfei and St Ishmael were both nephews of St Teilo.³⁰ Although the charter in which St Tyfei appears in the *Book of Llandaf* is not credible, the story that accompanies it possibly preserves a tradition that the saint was buried at Penally, suggesting a relationship between his cult and the cult of St Teilo. Similarly, St Ishmael's appears in a list of properties that were connected to the cult of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr, suggesting a relationship existed between the cults of St Ishmael and St Teilo during the period that the cult was located at Llandeilo Fawr. St Issel appears in the genealogical material as the father of St Teilo.³¹ The church of St Issel is found at St Issel's, Saundersfoot.³² Lamphey, the church of St Tyfei, St Ishmael's and St Issel's are all in the area of Penally, suggesting that they were all connected to the cult of St Teilo at Penally rather than Llandeilo Fawr. This reflects a relationship between these cults during the period between the seventh and ninth centuries when the cult of St Teilo was at its height in south-west Wales.

The relationship between the cult of St Cadog and the cults of his parents, SS. Gwladus and Gwynllyw, is more difficult to determine. Bassaleg, the church of St Gwladus was the main church of Gwynlliog early in the period. St Woolos, the church of St Gwynllyw, was another major church in the same cantref with links to the local ruling house.³³ The two dedications are close to each other, suggesting that there may have been an early relationship between them, but they are not near to Llancarfan or any other significant St Cadog foundation. None

²⁷ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064*, p. 618.

²⁸ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 76.

²⁹ J. Cartwright, 'The cult of St Non: rape, sanctity and motherhood in Welsh and Breton hagiography' in J.W. Evans & J.M. Wooding (eds.) *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 185-98; James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 49; K. Jankulak, 'Adjacent saints' dedications and early Celtic History' in S. Boardman, J.R. Davies & E. Williamson (eds.), *Saints Cults in the Celtic World* (Woodbridge, 2009), p. 101; B. Tanguy, 'The cults of SS Nonne and Divi in Brittany' in J.W. Evans, and J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 207-19.

³⁰ *Liber Landavensis Vita Beati Oudocei*, §1.

³¹ *Bonedd y Saint*, §5.

³² James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 62

³³ Knight, 'Society and Religion', pp. 277-8.

of the sites dedicated to St Cadog in the area of the cantref of Gwynlliog bear the ‘Cadog’ toponym of many of his dedications. Sites began to gain toponyms in the form ‘*llan*’ with a saint’s name some time in the late seventh century.³⁴ As the St Cadog dedications in this area do not bear this style of toponym it suggests that these sites became part of the cult of St Cadog in a later period of the cult’s expansion. This suggests that the relationship with the cults of St Gwladus and St Gwynllyw was not an early one, but reflects a relationship created between the two saints and St Cadog during a later period of expansion.

The *Book of Llandaf* records that St Efrddyl was the mother of St Dyfrig.³⁵ If there was an original cult of St Dyfrig at Moccas, as argued by Ben Guy, it is likely that his mother was a local saint, but probably not St Efrddyl.³⁶ She seems to have been chosen to be the mother of St Dyfrig by the composer of the *Book of Llandaf* in order to justify the claims to properties dedicated to her which appear in several charters in the *Book of Llandaf*.³⁷ Each of the main saints’ cults of south Wales can be seen to have created family relationships with other saints in order to benefit their cults. This process was not confined to any one point in the early medieval period, but was utilised by the foundations of these cults across the period. These relationships do not seem to reflect any real family connections. In the cases of St David and St Teilo the family ties were invented to explain relationships created between cults. Later in the period Llancarfan and Llandaf used the idea of a family connection as a way to expand and take over other cults: by the first quarter of the twelfth century Llandaf was using this simply as a way to legitimise its claims to properties across south Wales.

The relationships that appear between saints and their teachers and disciples are as complex as those with claimed family members. Some relationships which appear in the hagiography may reflect more genuine traditions while others follow the same trend as family claims. The proximity of dedications of a teacher or disciple to the principal foundation of the main saint can preserve a tradition of an actual relationship between the saints or between the early cults of those saints. St David was baptised by St Elvis (Ailbe in Irish) in Rhygyfarch’s *Life of St David*.³⁸ There is a dedication to the saint close to St Davids, suggesting that there may have

³⁴ Davies, ‘The Saints of South Wales’, p. 393.

³⁵ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §14.

³⁶ B. Guy, ‘The *Life* of St Dyfrig and the Lost Charters of Moccas (Mochros), Herefordshire’ in *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 75 (2018), pp. 16-17.

³⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 79.

³⁸ *Vita Sancti David*, §7.

been a relationship between the two cults.³⁹ St Justinian lived on Ramsey Island, the island retreat of St David. St Justinian was also the confessor of St David according to the *Life of St Justinian*.⁴⁰ The fact that neither of these sites were reculted, despite their position close to St Davids suggests that they held their own position in the cult of St David. St Teilo's teacher, St Paulinus, had his cult at Llandoverly, a site close to Llandeilo Fawr.⁴¹ Similarly, St Tathan was the teacher of St Cadog, and there was a dedication to him at Llanfeuthin, just to the north of Llancarfan.⁴² However, some relationships between saints that were created later in the period do not reflect genuine connections between cults as in the cases above. Most of the relationships recorded in the hagiography of the *Book of Llandaf* were created by its authors to legitimise claims to properties by Llandaf. In both the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* and the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Teilo* there appear lists of disciples of the two saints.⁴³ The names on these lists do not reflect real relationships held by those saints, rather they are included to legitimise grants to properties dedicated to those saints, or because those people act as witnesses to grants supposedly made to Llandaf.⁴⁴ Relationships between saints were not only used to support property claims, but also to legitimise the status of a saint's cult. St Illtud appears in the Lives of both St Cadog and St Dyfrig. In the *Life of St Cadog* he is a rough soldier who only takes the habit because of St Cadog's mercy.⁴⁵ In the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, he defers to St Dyfrig, who comes and visits Llanilltud Fawr regularly. It is St Dyfrig who ordains St Samson at Llanilltud Fawr rather than St Illtud.⁴⁶ These incidents are designed to undermine the cult of St Illtud and to show that Llancarfan and Llandaf were superior to Llanilltud Fawr.⁴⁷

Saints travelling is a standard motif of hagiography. Travelling for the purpose of pilgrimage is a major feature of many of the Welsh saints' *Lives*. Surprisingly, the main pilgrimage destination in the Lives of the main Welsh saints is Jerusalem rather than Rome. The *Life of St Cadog* does mention that the saint had been on pilgrimage to Rome seven times, but it is his visit to Jerusalem that appears in detail.⁴⁸ SS. David, Teilo and Padarn all go on

³⁹ J.M. Wooding, 'The figure of David' in J.W. Evans, and J.M. Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 11.

⁴⁰ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 50.

⁴¹ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §3.

⁴² Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §7.

⁴³ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15; *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §16.

⁴⁴ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p 373; Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 81-3.

⁴⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §19.

⁴⁶ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §16.

⁴⁷ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, p. 80.

⁴⁸ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§14, 26.

pilgrimage together, which is described in detail in the hagiography of each saint.⁴⁹ The fact that they all go to Jerusalem instead of Rome may be because in the period when the saints were active Rome had not claimed its place as the centre of the Church and Jerusalem was still the focal point for pilgrimage. However, the popularity of pilgrimage to Jerusalem seen in the hagiography may be more reflective of the period in which they were written. Jerusalem had become the focus of much religious and political attention in the second half of the eleventh century in the lead up to the First Crusade. Jerusalem subsequently appeared in the Lives of St David, St Cadog, St Cyngar, St Cybi, St Padarn and St Teilo in the following century.⁵⁰ The pilgrimages described in the hagiography may reflect real pilgrimages made by the saints, or early traditions of them having gone on pilgrimage. The reason these pilgrimages are found in so many of the Welsh *Lives* may have roots in the eleventh and twelfth century rather than the origins of the traditions. After the Norman Conquest of England the Welsh saints were open to a lot more scrutiny from a Continental audience who had their own pantheon of saints to rate them against. At this time none of the Welsh saints had been canonized. The way that the pilgrimages in the hagiography describe the patriarch and wider members of the Church recognising the saints and their position suggests that they were trying to legitimise the saints to their Norman neighbours and eventual conquerors. Bishop Bernard actively campaigned to have St David canonized some time between 1119 and 1124.⁵¹ This shows that having him officially recognised by the Church as a saint was important to St Davids in this period, and may reflect wider attitudes to the legitimisation of the Welsh saints.

There are many dedications to different saints across Wales. Most of these dedications appear just once or twice within a small area.⁵² Most of these saints' cults were lost or taken over during the course of the early medieval period. Those saints' cults that survived had associations with other cults across Wales, but also had firm connections outside of Wales. Many of the relationships cultivated by major foundations in early medieval south Wales were used to create a complex landscape of dedications to their saint and related saints. The most successful saints in Wales also had dedications and connections to other saints' cults in other countries, usually Ireland and Brittany. In the hagiography saints are described as

⁴⁹ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§46-8; *Vita Sancti Paterni*, §20.

⁵⁰ G.H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), p. 176 n. 46.

⁵¹ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 390.

⁵² N. Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology' in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 225.

visiting other countries and notable saints. Many of these saints did not have dedications in Wales so they were not featured to explain relationships between saint's cults within Wales or to claim properties. The only real advantage to be gained by foundations claiming these relationships would have been to demonstrate that they were the equal of the major foundations of Ireland and Brittany. However, in some cases they may reflect genuine connections between Welsh saints and their foundations and different saint's cults in other countries, mainly Ireland and Brittany.

In the hagiography these Irish and Breton saints most often appear as teachers and disciples. St David had strong links with Ireland through his relationships with other saints. St Patrick, the most notable Irish saint in the early medieval period, appears in the *Life of St David*. In the episode St Patrick wants to settle at *Vallis Rosina* but is told by God that the site has been assigned to St David.⁵³ While this could just be a reference to a prominent saint to increase the status of St David by showing he was the equal of St Patrick, the episode mentions a chapel which is located at Porth Mawr which is dedicated to St Patrick.⁵⁴ The fact that the chapel remained so close to St David's suggests that it marked the presence of the cult of St Patrick in south-west Wales that was related to the cult of St David. The relationship between St David and St Elvis has already been mentioned above. St Elvis was the patron saint of Munster, a foundation whose only superior was St Patrick's foundation at Armagh. St David also appears in the Irish *Life of St Ailbe*, suggesting that there may have been an actual relationship between the two cults.⁵⁵

Two Irish disciples of St David also appear in the hagiography: St Modomnoc and St Máedhóg (Aidan).⁵⁶ St Máedhóg does have a dedication in Wales at Llawhaden, Pembrokeshire, which seems to have maintained a relationship with St David's.⁵⁷ It is not surprising that the cult of St David had strong links with Ireland. Dyfed was largely controlled by an Irish dynasty from the fifth to eighth centuries, which would have had an influence on the cult of St David.⁵⁸ The relationship between the cult of St David and areas of Ireland can also be seen in his inclusion in a number of early medieval Irish documents. St David appears in the *Martyrology of Tallaght* and *Félire Oengusso*, both produced at Tallaght

⁵³ *Vita Sancti David*, §3.

⁵⁴ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 51.

⁵⁵ Wooding, 'The figure of David', pp. 11-12.

⁵⁶ *Vita Sancti David*, §§41, 43, 15, 35, 36, 42.

⁵⁷ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 58.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

in the early ninth century.⁵⁹ His appearance in these documents would suggest some kind of relationship with Tallaght in this period. The relationship between St Davids and Ireland was clearly maintained throughout the early medieval period, as can be seen in the fact that Sulien, who became the bishop of St Davids in the eleventh century, is known to have studied in Ireland.⁶⁰ The cult of St Cadog also had links to Ireland. St Cadog's teacher was St Tathan, an Irish saint who had come to live in Wales.⁶¹ There are dedications to St Tathan at Llanfeuthin and Caerwent that were connected to the cult of St Cadog. While this does not create a link to a saint's cult in Ireland, it does show the Irish influence on St Cadog. The hagiography describes how the saint went to Ireland to learn under Muchutu at Lismore.⁶² When St Cadog returned to Wales from Ireland he brought with him two new disciples: St Finnian and St Macmoil.⁶³ St Cadog also features in the Irish *Life of St Finnian*, where the two of them travel together from Ireland to Wales. St Finnian was the founder of Clonard Abbey. The hagiography suggests that the cult of St Cadog had links with Lismore and Clonard.⁶⁴ The genealogy of St Cadog claims a relationship with 'the best stocks of the kings of the Irish'.⁶⁵ This shows that in the mid-twelfth century the cult of St Cadog was still promoting a connection to Ireland.⁶⁶

St Illtud appears to have had no relationship with Ireland, but instead had strong links with Brittany and several saints' cults there. The most obvious of these is the cult of St Samson. St Illtud appears in the Breton *Life of St Samson* as his wise teacher. The author of the text also claims to have been to the monastery of St Illtud, suggesting strong links between Dol and the cult of St Illtud in Wales.⁶⁷ St Paul Aurélian and St Gildas also appear as pupils of St Illtud, both in the *Life of St Illtud* and their own Lives.⁶⁸ The *Life of St Paulinus* and the *Life of St Gildas* were composed in Brittany in the ninth century and eleventh century respectively. The ninth-century Breton Lives of SS. Maglorius and Brioc also feature St Illtud in them as their teacher and master respectively.⁶⁹ The cult of St Illtud itself had a strong

⁵⁹ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 377; Wooding, 'The figure of David', p. 11.

⁶⁰ P. Ó Riain, 'The Irish Element in Welsh Hagiographical Tradition' in D. Ó Corráin (ed.), *Irish Antiquity* (Cork, 1981), p. 294.

⁶¹ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §7.

⁶² Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §10.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, §11.

⁶⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, pp. 618, 624.

⁶⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §46.

⁶⁶ Ó Riain, 'The Irish Element', pp. 296-7.

⁶⁷ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§7-13.

⁶⁸ *Vita Gildae*, §§3-6; *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §11; *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §§1-4.

⁶⁹ S. Baring-Gould, & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. I (London, 1907), pp. 288-92; S. Baring-Gould, & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. III (London, 1911), p. 407.

presence in Brittany, with dedications in Léon, Tréguier and Vannes.⁷⁰ The cults of St Illtud and St Paul Aurélian seem to have had quite a close relationship in both Wales and in Brittany. In Wales, Llanhamlach, an important St Illtud dedication, lies next to Llangors, the main foundation of St Paul Aurélian. In Léon the parish of Lampaul Plouarzel, an area of the cult of St Paul Aurélian, lies across the river from the parish of Lanildut.⁷¹ This all suggests that the cult of St Illtud in Wales maintained a relationship with the cults of several saints in Brittany, and in particular with the cult of St Paul Aurélian, right across the early medieval period, from at least the seventh century when the *Life of St Samson* was composed.

There are no links between St Dyfrig and either Ireland or Brittany: there are no saints' cults from either country which have a relationship with the cult of St Dyfrig, nor are there any dedications to him in either place. The only Breton saint with links to St Dyfrig is St Samson. In the seventh-century *Life of St Samson* St Dyfrig ordains St Samson as both deacon and bishop, and helps to elect him to succeed St Pyro as abbot.⁷² This role in St Samson's life would have led to a connection between cults. The connection between a saint and those who play important roles, like teacher have already been shown. The fact that there is no relationship between the cults of St Dyfrig and St Samson, despite St Dyfrig featuring in the *Life of St Samson* is most likely the result of the early disappearance of the cult of St Dyfrig. It is likely that by the seventh century his cult had declined to a point where it had no power to create any links with Dol in Brittany. As the cult of St Dyfrig was not revived by Llandaf until the eleventh century there was no chance for it to expand in either Ireland or Brittany. The *Book of Llandaf* attempts to create a picture of a cult that stretched back to the seventh century, but it was mainly concerned with the status of Llandaf and claims to properties and privileges, rather than with creating links with Ireland or Brittany. The hagiography attempts to create several relationships for St Dyfrig by providing a list of disciples of the saint.⁷³ As these were either people connected to St Teilo, whose cult was already under the control of Llandaf, or unknown clerics whose only documentation is their appearance in charters included in the *Book of Llandaf*, it would not have been difficult for Llandaf to fabricate these relationships. However, wider relationships with Irish or Breton saints would have been harder to create when St Dyfrig was so unknown. The fact that the second *Life of St Dyfrig* by Benedict of Gloucester says that the composer wanted to promote the saint because he was

⁷⁰ E.G. Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints in Wales* (Cardiff, 1954), p. 43.

⁷¹ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 99.

⁷² *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §13, 33-6, 44.

⁷³ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §15.

not well known, shows that even after the composition of the *Book of Llandaf* St Dyfrig was not a familiar saint suggests that it would have been difficult to impose him on other cults with no connection to Llandaf.

There were clear links between the saint's cults of Wales, Ireland and Brittany. The connection between the cult of St David and Ireland is logical due to the location of St Davids on the western coast of Wales, in an area with direct sea links with Ireland throughout the medieval period. The *Martyrology of Tallaght* contains three Welsh saints: St David, St Beuno and St Deiniol.⁷⁴ All three of these saints' cults were based on the west coast of Wales in areas with sea links with Ireland. The links between the cult of St Cadog and Ireland are more peculiar. The cult of St Cadog lies in east Wales, with most of its foundations in inland areas of Glamorgan, and none of them on the west coast. This suggests that links between ecclesiastical foundations in Wales and Ireland were so developed that they did not have to rely on easy routes of passage, leading to an Irish presence across south Wales. It is interesting to note that while links between Wales and Ireland may have been strong throughout the period, and there were numerous dedications to Irish saints in Wales, the same does not seem to be true in Ireland. Dedications to Irish saints related to a particular saints cult in Wales created a complex landscape of mother and daughter churches across Wales. There is no evidence of medieval dedications to Welsh saints in Ireland: St Cadog may have had strong links with St Finnian, but there do not appear to be any St Cadog foundations in the area of Clonard; nor do any St David dedications appear in the area of Ferns or Munster. This suggests that the creation of dedication patterns in Ireland were quite different to the process in south Wales.

The distribution of dedications to Welsh saints in Brittany, however, reflects that found in south Wales in the early medieval period. As already discussed, St Illtud has dedications in Léon, Tréguier and Vannes. St Cadog has dedications in Vannes and Finistère. There is also a chapel to St Cadog at Ile de S Cadou near Belz, thought to be the site described in the *Life of St Cadog* as an island retreat he founded in Brittany with a bridge made out of blocks that connected it to the mainland.⁷⁵ St Teilo has dedications in the area of Cournouaille, Quimper.⁷⁶ As in Wales, the cult of St David in Brittany was widespread. There are dedications to him at Dirinon, Lanmeur, Plouaret, Plouguernével, Scaër, Tonquédec and

⁷⁴ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 377.

⁷⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §35; S. Baring-Gould, & J. Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. II (London, 1908), pp. 26-7, 38.

⁷⁶ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 203-8

Quimperlé. Some dedications to St David in Brittany may have originally been to saints with similar names, like St Ivy, but as the cult of St David expanded it absorbed these dedications.⁷⁷ This shows a similar process of reculting as occurred with the expansion of the cult of St David in Wales. St David also appears in the ninth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian* as one of the disciples of St Illtud.⁷⁸ However, while the cult of St David was clearly successful in Brittany, by at least the late eleventh century it had become isolated from the cult of St David in Wales. This can be seen in the fact that Brittany is never mentioned in Rhygyfarch's *Life of St David*.⁷⁹ This does not reflect any wider trend in Wales in the period. The *Life of St Cadog* features a journey to Wales where he founds an island retreat, as mentioned above. The composer of the *Book of Llandaf* inserted several episodes into the *Life of St Teilo* that are based in Brittany. Even though these episodes were inserted erroneously, it still shows that Llandaf was willing to promote a connection to Brittany, unlike St Davids.

Despite being geographical neighbours, there are no significant connections between any of the major Welsh saints and England, as there are with Ireland and Brittany. The *Life of St David* contains a list of monasteries in England that were supposedly founded by St David.⁸⁰ However, none of these sites were actually dedicated to St David, suggesting that they were only included in the *Life* to promote claims on these foundations by St Davids in the late eleventh century, rather than as evidence of any earlier relationship. The only area that seems to have had any connection to any Welsh saints is Cornwall. St Cadog is described as travelling through Cornwall and calling forth a spring there, at a place named in the hagiography as 'Dinsol'.⁸¹ In the *Life of St Ceinwen*, St Cadog's aunt, he goes to minister to her at her death in Cornwall.⁸² She has a dedication at St Keynes in Cornwall. St David appears in a number of Anglo-Saxon calendars from the eleventh century: a calendar of Leofric, a sacramentary and a calendar from the West Country. While this could be seen as evidence of St David being venerated in England, as with his inclusion in the Irish martyrologies, all three of these documents were produced under the influence of Asser.⁸³ Asser was a cleric from St Davids who was invited by Alfred the Great to join the English court, and is known for writing the biography of Alfred. Other than Asser, there is little

⁷⁷ Tanguy, 'The cults of SS Nonne and Divi', pp. 207, 216-17.

⁷⁸ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §3.

⁷⁹ Tanguy, 'The cults of SS Nonne and Divi', p. 213.

⁸⁰ *Vita Sancti David*, §13.

⁸¹ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §31.

⁸² Baring-Gould, & Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints* Vol. I, p. 52.

⁸³ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 378.

evidence of any religious cultural exchange between Wales and England during this time. There is little evidence for any of the Welsh saints being commemorated in areas outside of Cornwall either. This suggests that Wales did not have a similar relationship with the foundations of England as it did with Ireland and Brittany.

The foundations of south Wales in the early medieval period were not isolated institutions: they were part of a developed system of multiple dedications with links to other minor saints' cults that created a complex landscape of mother and daughter churches.⁸⁴ It would be wrong to suppose that each of these major developed saints' cults existed in isolation, with no connection between them. Just as the relationships cultivated with minor saints were important, so too were the relationships between the principal foundations of the main saints' cults in south Wales. These relationships changed and developed over the early medieval period. There is a clear east-west divide between the saints' cults, suggesting that geography played a key role in how relationships developed early in the period. In the south-east the cults of St Cadog and St Illtud dominated for much of the period, with the rise of Llandaf and the cult of SS. Dyfrig, Teilo and Euddogwy in the twelfth century. In the south-west the landscape was dominated by the cults of St David and St Teilo, and St Padarn in the mid-west.

The relationship between the cult of St David and the cult of St Teilo is attested in both the historical and hagiographical sources. By the mid-ninth century there was clearly a close relationship between Llandeilo Fawr and St Davids. In the ninth century Nobis first became bishop of Llandeilo Fawr, then bishop and later archbishop of St Davids.⁸⁵ It shows that in the ninth century a bishop from Llandeilo Fawr went on to become the archbishop at St Davids, suggesting a culture of exchange between the two foundations. Nobis was not the only bishop from a St Teilo foundation to have served as a bishop in the see of Dyfed. A passage found in some medieval Welsh law books datable to the late ninth or early eleventh century names seven bishop houses in Dyfed. Most were foundations in the cult of St David but at least two were originally part of the cult of St Teilo; Llandeulyddog and Llandeilo Llwydarth.⁸⁶ Whether each of these bishop houses was active at the same time or at different points in the period, it shows that foundations of the cult of St Teilo were playing an active

⁸⁴ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p.

⁸⁵ J.G. Evans & J. Rhys, *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv* (Oxford, 1893), p. xlv; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064*, p 593; Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 377.

⁸⁶ T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Seven Bishop-Houses of Dyfed', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 24.3 (1971), pp. 247, 251-62.

role alongside St David foundations. The cult of St Teilo had influence in Dyfed, not just in Ystrad Tywi, and held important positions that were shared with clerics of the cult of St David. The relationship is further highlighted by the hagiography. In the *Life of St David* and the *Life of St Teilo* the two saints go with St Padarn on pilgrimage to Jerusalem.⁸⁷ The fact that the relics that were brought back from Jerusalem were attested as being held in different churches in south-west Wales that were related to the three saints suggests an early tradition created by St Davids, Llandeilo Fawr and Llanbadarn Fawr to create a link between the three saints' cults.

The ninth century seems to mark the point where the relationship between the cults of St Teilo and St David was at its strongest. By the eleventh century the relationship had clearly changed. The cult of St Teilo declined drastically in the course of the tenth century, seen in the move of the *Lichfield Gospels* to Lichfield Cathedral and the eventual move of the centre of the cult of St Teilo to Llandaf, seemingly by 1045 when Bishop Joseph died, who is recorded as being both the bishop of the altar of St Teilo and the bishop at Llandaf.⁸⁸ The decline of the cult of St Teilo can be seen as a direct result of the expansion of Dyfed and the promotion of the cult of St David.⁸⁹ An inscribed stone at Llandeilo Fawr from the late fifth or early sixth century which was erected for someone with an Irish name suggests that the cult of St Teilo was patronised by a local Irish dynasty.⁹⁰ In the late ninth or early tenth century the family of Hywel Dda expanded their power through Dyfed and Ystrad Tywi.⁹¹ It may have been at this point that the family that had patronised Llandeilo Fawr was destroyed. The expansion of Deheubarth in the eleventh and twelfth centuries which actively promoted the cult of St David was probably the final factor that caused the cult of St Teilo to leave Llandeilo Fawr. The late ninth and early tenth century marks the beginning of a period when St Davids started to claim St Teilo foundations. In the twelfth century Rhys ap Gruffydd granted several foundations to St Davids, including Lamphey.⁹² In the *Life of St David* Rhygyfarch makes a special point of making the Patriarch of Jerusalem single out St David and promote him to the archiepiscopate.⁹³ This all clearly highlights that from the late ninth century the relationship between the cults of St David and St Teilo had completely changed:

⁸⁷ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §§7-8; *Vita Sancti David*, §§44-8.

⁸⁸ Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p 368; W. Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978), p. 155; Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p. 9.

⁸⁹ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', pp. 41, 58, 63.

⁹⁰ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p. 238.

⁹¹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064*, p. 508

⁹² James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', pp. 63, 67-70.

⁹³ *Vita Sancti David*, §46.

in the period prior to this the cults worked together and had a culture of exchange between their foundations; from the late ninth century St Davids steadily became more and more dominant, marginalising the cult of St Teilo until it was ejected entirely from south-west Wales and using the hagiographical material to further establish the dominance of St Davids over the cult of St Teilo. Llandaf, the new home of the cult of St Teilo, attempted to establish its authority over St David through the *Life of St Teilo*, which makes St Teilo the successor to St Peter and marks him out as being holier than St David and St Padarn, and through the charters which claimed many properties in south-west Wales.⁹⁴ However, this campaign had little success, with many of the properties claimed, including Llandeilo Fawr, coming under the control of the bishop of St Davids during the twelfth century.⁹⁵ By the middle of the twelfth century the only relationship that remained between the cults of St David and St Teilo was one of rivalry.

There was a clear relationship between the cults of St Illtud and St Cadog throughout the early medieval period. The Llancarfan charters suggest that there were clear links between Llanilltud Fawr, Llancarfan and Llandough in the seventh century. Early in the seventh century members from each of the three foundations acted as witnesses to two charters making grants to Llancarfan, and all three were witness to another grant later in the century.⁹⁶ Two further grants in the late seventh century were witnessed by only members of the *familia* of Llanilltud Fawr and Llancarfan.⁹⁷ Of the five charters from the eighth century only one was witnessed by those from both Llanilltud Fawr and Llancarfan; the rest were witnessed only by clerics from Llancarfan.⁹⁸ The change in the relationships between the three foundations can clearly be seen through these charters. Early in the seventh century the three were of equal status and actively involved in each other's affairs. Llandough's disappearance from the charters by the end of the seventh century probably marks the decline of the foundation. Llanilltud Fawr's reduced presence as witness in the eighth century and eventual disappearance shows that Llancarfan had begun to act independently of Llanilltud Fawr, suggesting that the close relationship that had existed a century earlier had started to erode.

Llanilltud Fawr and Llancarfan were linked through their patrons. Several of the Llancarfan charters were granted by King Meurig and his descendants in the seventh and eighth

⁹⁴ *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §8.

⁹⁵ Davies, *The Book of Llandaf*, pp. 172-84.

⁹⁶ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§65, 68, 67.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, §§62, 64.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, §§55, 56, 59, 61, 66; Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-1064*, pp. 272-3.

centuries.⁹⁹ Several rulers of the same dynasty were buried at Llanilltud Fawr between the eighth and tenth centuries.¹⁰⁰ Llanilltud Fawr was close to the *llys* court at Llysworney, which may explain the close connection it held with the ruling dynasty. Inscribed stones continued to be erected at Llanilltud Fawr through to the twelfth century, suggesting a continuation of this patronage throughout the period.¹⁰¹ In the late eleventh century *Life of St Cadog*, Meurig is made the nephew of St Cadog, connecting the cult of St Cadog and the dynasty of Meurig, which also suggests a continued relationship between the cult of St Cadog and the rulers of Glamorgan. It seems as if Llanilltud Fawr benefitted from greater patronage from these rulers than Llancarfan did: in terms of inscribed stones, Llanilltud Fawr had nine stones erected at the site, while Llancarfan only had one. However, even though Llanilltud Fawr seems to have had greater patronage, by the late eleventh century the cult of St Illtud was in decline while Llancarfan was prospering. Lifris' *Life of St Cadog* inserts an episode about St Illtud in which St Cadog spares his life and gives him the tonsure.¹⁰² St Cadog is not mentioned at all in the *Life of St Samson* in relation to St Illtud's ordination, which is attributed to St Germanus instead.¹⁰³ Lifris was using the hagiography to try and show Llancarfan's dominance over Llanilltud Fawr. This suggests that the relationship between the two cults had reached the same point by the end of the eleventh century as the cults of St David and St Teilo had: they were connected only by rivalry and the desire to show dominance over the other.

A case could be made for a rivalry between the cults of St David and St Cadog, but it only existed quite late in the period and appears to have been largely one sided. Lifris included two episodes in his *Life of St Cadog* which show St Cadog's superiority to St David.¹⁰⁴ It seems unlikely that Lifris would have included these episodes unless he considered Llancarfan to have been in a position to rival St Davids. This suggests that in the last decade of the eleventh century Llancarfan may have been the dominant foundation in south-east Wales. As has been discussed previously, the absence of these episodes in the later *Life of St Cadog* by Caradog of Llancarfan suggests that by the mid- twelfth century Llancarfan had lost its position as the principal foundation in the south-east, most likely due to its take over by Gloucester and the break up of its estates.

⁹⁹ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§55, 62, 64, 65, 68.

¹⁰⁰ M. Redknap & J.M. Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales Vol I* (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 369-73, 378-82, 386-89.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 369-96

¹⁰² Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §19.

¹⁰³ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §7.

¹⁰⁴ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§13, 17.

Cults of south Wales in the Landscape

The presence of a saint in the landscape has often been seen as an important reflection of their cult. Dedications to a saint can show the geographical spread of a cult, while associated sites like holy wells and standing stones demonstrate the development of a complex sacred landscape. There can be seen two important aspects of a successful cult of a saint in the landscape: the local cult around the saint's principal foundation; and the wider cult that developed and grew with the success of the saint's cult.

The relationship between Welsh saints and the local landscape is very clear in south Wales. The associations between a saint and the landscape within a localised area were important for the development of a successful pilgrim landscape.¹⁰⁵ Heather James has shown that at St Davids there was a highly developed sacred landscape which catered to pilgrims. The ultimate destination would have been the church of St Davids, or the cathedral later in the period. Around this there were a number of chapels that were absorbed into the cathedral close when it was constructed.¹⁰⁶ St Non's Chapel lay close by, claimed to be located on the site of St David's birth, with the stone marked by St Non's hands during childbirth incorporated into the altar.¹⁰⁷ At Porth Mawr stands St Patrick's Chapel, a site mentioned in the *Life of St David*.¹⁰⁸ To the east of the chapel stands the holy well, Ffynnon Faiddog, dedicated to St Máedhóg, one of St David's disciples.¹⁰⁹ At Porth Stinian a Chapel of St Justinian and a holy well stand above the cove. The site marks the place to embark to Ramsey Island.¹¹⁰ At the harbour at St Davids Capel-y-Pistill marks the site of a holy spring, traditionally said to mark the place of the saint's baptism.¹¹¹ There are several sacred sites on the approach to St Davids: Capel-y-Gwrhyd at the bridge crossing the River Alun; Capel yr Hen Fynwent, and Cwmwdig, now lost, on the road from Cardigan; and Ffynnon Pen-Arthur, a holy well with four inscribed stones, which lies on the road to Porth Mawr.¹¹² This would have created a highly developed and complex landscape for pilgrims to St Davids.

¹⁰⁵ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 43.

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¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p 49; James, 'The Cult of St David', p. 12.

¹⁰⁸ *Vita Sancti David*, §

¹⁰⁹ James, 'The Cult of St David', pp. 7, 9.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹² Ibid., pp.12-13, 16.

Similarly developed landscapes are associated with the other major cults of south Wales. At Llancarfan are several sites which form a sacred topography to the cult of St Cadog. To the north of Llancarfan lies Llanfeuthin, the possible site of the early cemetery of St Cadog's monastery.¹¹³ Castle Ditches, an Iron Age fort close to Llancarfan corresponds with Cadog's Kastil mentioned in the hagiography.¹¹⁴ The *Life of St Cadog* also describes Erw Wen, a special field close to Llancarfan and a chapel to St Finnian where a miracle occurred.¹¹⁵ Both sites are now lost, but their inclusion in the hagiography suggests they formed part of an important sacred landscape around Llancarfan in the eleventh century. Around Llandeilo Fawr were Carreg Deilo, Maenor Deilo, Ynys Deilo and Ffynnon Deilo at the base of a hill known as Pen-Ffynnon Deilo.¹¹⁶ The cult of St Illtud is unusual, as, unlike the cults of St David, St Cadog and St Teilo, there was no developed sacred topography around the principal foundation. Instead, there were two separate areas in Brycheiniog where St Illtud is found in the local landscape. At Llanhamlach there is a chapel to St Illtud with an inscribed stone. Close to this lies a cairn known as Tŷ Illtud and a standing stone called Maen Illtud. They all lie by a stream called Ffynnon Illtud.¹¹⁷ At Llanilltyd there is also a chapel to St Illtud which lies beside a chambered cairn known as Bedd Gŵyl Illtud. The nearby hill is called Mynydd Illtud.¹¹⁸ The sacred topography of St Davids was highly developed, reflecting the fact that it was a busy pilgrimage destination. The sacred landscapes around Llancarfan, Llandeilo Fawr, Llanhamlach and Llanilltyd were far less developed by comparison. However, the presence of the sites described above does show that there was a pattern of developed pilgrim landscapes associated with each of the major saints' cults in south Wales.

Islands are often important places in the geography of a saints' cult. Islands represent liminal spaces that provide a retreat for a saint and the members of their *familia* in subsequent centuries. St Davids is connected to Ramsey Island, a site off the coast of St Davids. There are two chapels on Ramsey and another at Porth Stinian, the place to sail to Ramsey.¹¹⁹ St Cadog is associated with both Flatholm and Barry Island in the hagiography.¹²⁰ He is also

¹¹³ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §9; J. Knight, *South Wales: From the Romans to the Normans* (Stroud, 2013), p. 90.

¹¹⁴ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §9; Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p. 567.

¹¹⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §9, 12.

¹¹⁶ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 198.

¹¹⁷ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 139; L.V. Grinsell, 'The Later History of Tŷ Illtud' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 130 (1981), pp. 131, 135.

¹¹⁸ Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, p. 140.

¹¹⁹ James, 'The Cult of St David', p. 11; James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 50.

¹²⁰ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §18.

connected to a small island in Brittany, as mentioned above.¹²¹ The Breton hagiography suggests that St Illtud was associated with an island, most probably Caldey Island, as discussed previously.¹²² This phenomenon is in no way confined to south Wales: St Beuno is linked with Bardsey Island and St Seiriol with Ynys Seiriol. The chapels at the embarkation point and on the island at Ramsey show that these island retreats were also often part of the pilgrim landscape that surrounded a saint's cult.

In her analysis of the geography of the cult of St David, James suggested that the sites of the cult of St David fell into several categories: those located liminally or centrally within a cantref; those which appeared as daughter sites; those located on routeways; and those that acted as estate churches to secular estates. The daughter sites were often post-Norman, so are not relevant to the period addressed here.¹²³ For the cult of St David several sites were identified in liminal locations. The bishop houses, St Ismaels, Rhoscrowther, St Issels, Llawhaden were all liminally sited within the cantrefi.¹²⁴ Llanychllwydog, Llanllawer and Llanychaer were all located on the eastern boundary of Pebidiog.¹²⁵ Henllan Amgoed, Meidrum Glogswm, Llangyfelach and Llywel were all located centrally within cantrefi.¹²⁶ Brawdy and Whitchurch lie on the route from Haverford West to St Davids, while Llanhaden lies on what was the Roman road. James concluded that the majority of the foundations of the cult of St David lay in areas liminal to the cantrefi of medieval south Wales, which often also corresponded with linear routes.¹²⁷

In many ways these classifications can be applied to all the main cults of south Wales. Each have dedications which appear in similar contexts to those of the cult of St David. Map 13 shows the dedications of the cults of St David, St Teilo, St Cadog and St Illtud in relation to the medieval cantrefi of south Wales and the known Roman roads. In most of the cantrefi that have St Cadog dedications at least one appears in a liminal context. In Gwent Uwch Coed Llangatog Penrhos and Trefeithin lie near the border. Llangatock-juxta-Caerleon appears on the border of Gwent Is Coed. Llanedern is on the western border of Gwynllwg. In Penychen Llancadle is on the eastern boundary of the cantref and Cadoxton is on the coast. Cadoxton-juxta-Neath lies on the coastal border of Gorfynydd. In the Gower both Cheriton and Port

¹²¹ Ibid., §35.

¹²² See chapter on St Illtud.

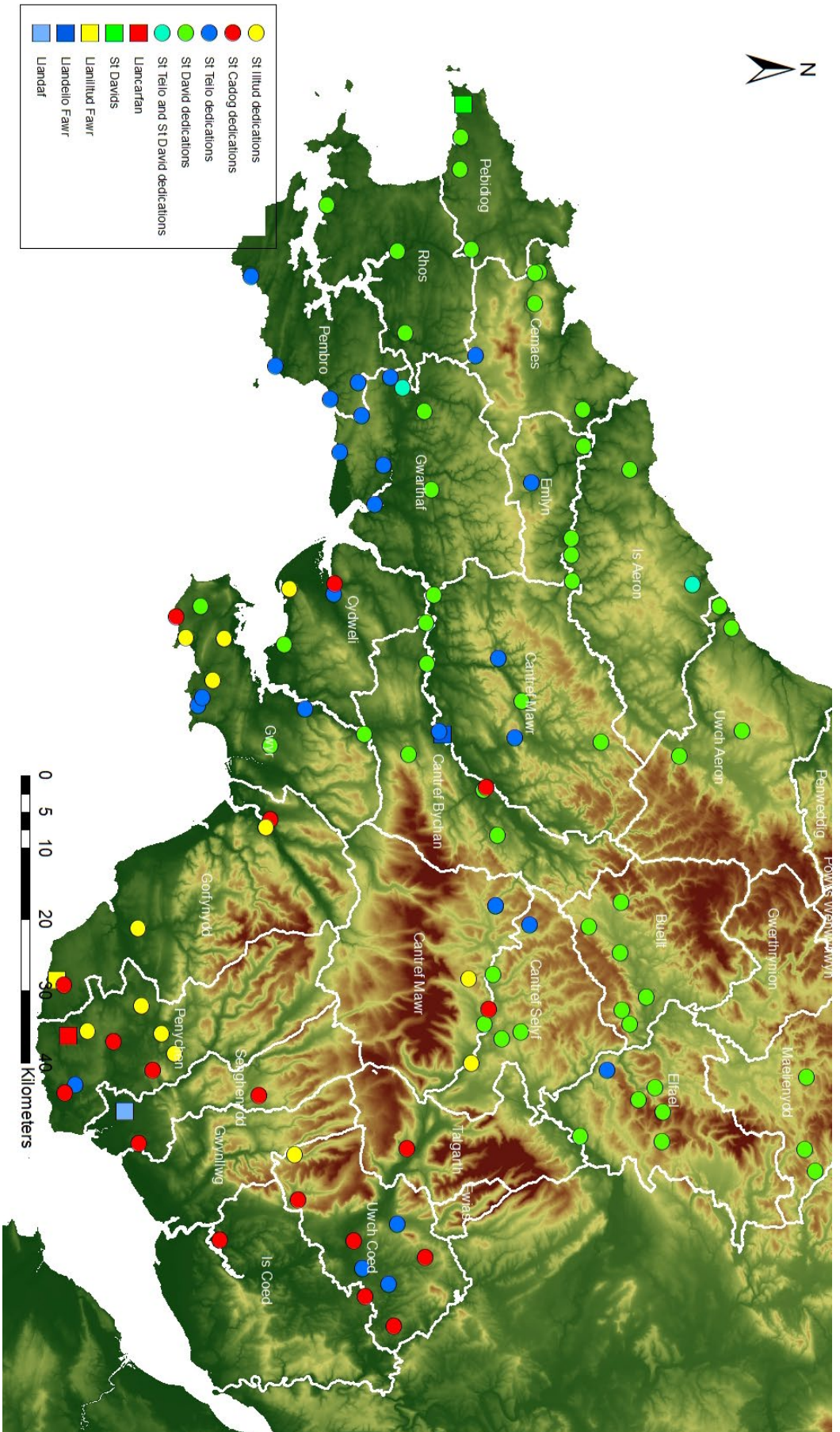
¹²³ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 43.

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp. 47, 57, 59.

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 54-5.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 82

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 63.



Map 13 Sites dedicated to St Cadog, St David, St Dyfrig, St Illtud and St Teilo in south Wales

Eyrion lie on the coast. Llangadog in Cydweli also lies on the coast. Llangadog in Cantref Brychan lies on the border with Ystrad Tywi. Llanspyddid lies on the border of Cantref Selyf, Brycheiniog. In Glywsing and Gwent, the main area of the cult of St Cadog, St Cadog dedications appear in liminal position in each cantref except Senghenydd. Similarly, many St Teilo dedications appear liminally within their cantrefi: Penally in Penfro; Pendine, Cronwern and Llandeilo Velfrey in Gwarthaf; Llandeilo Llwydarth in Cemaes; in the Gower Llandeilo Tal-y-bont and Caswell Chapel lie on the coast; Llandeilo Fawr in Cantref Mawr, Ystrad Tyfi; Llandeilo'r-fân in Cantref Selyf, Brycheiniog; and Llandeilo Graban in Elfael. In contrast, relatively few St Illtud dedications appear in a liminal position. Llanilltud Fawr and Llantwit-juxta-Neath both appear on the coast of Gorfynydd, while Llanrhidian, Oxwich and Llanilltud Gwyr lie in coastal areas of the Gower. Inland, Capel Illtud and Llanhamlach lie on the border between Cantref Mawr and Cantref Selyf, Brycheiniog.

Many dedications also appear more centrally within cantrefi, Llangattock-nigh-Usk and Llangattock Lingoed are all St Cadog dedications which appear centrally in the cantrefi of Gwent Is Coed and Gwent Uwch Coed. In Glywsing, St Cadog dedications appear centrally within a cantref only in Penychen at Pentyrch and Pendeulwyn and at Gelligaer in Senghenydd. Bassaleg and Llangeinor, which are associated with the cult of St Cadog, also appear centrally in Gwynllwg and Gorfynydd. Llangattock in Tregarth is the only St Cadog dedication to appear centrally in Brycheiniog. In south-west Wales, St Teilo dedications appear centrally at Cilrhedyn in Emlyn, Llanfechan in Is Aeron and at Brechfa and Talley in Cantref Mawr. In Gwent, St Teilo dedications lie centrally at Llantilio Pertholey, Llantilio Crosseny and Llanarth. The cult of St Illtud has dedications that appear centrally in the area of south Glywsing at Llanharry, Llantrisant, Llantwit Fardre and Llanilltyd in Penychen, and at Ewenny in Gorfynydd. For the cult of St Cadog, the distribution of dedications within cantrefi in the eastern areas of the cult roughly reflects that of the cult of St David. In Gwent Is Coed, Gwent Uwch Coed, Gwynllwg, Penychen and Gorfynydd there are both liminal and central dedications. The more western and northern dedications, in the Gower Cydweli, Cantref Bychan and Cantref Selyf the dedications only appear at the edges of the cantrefi. The dedications to St Teilo and St Illtud appear entirely centrally within some cantrefi and entirely liminally within others, rather than the mixture seen with the cults of St David and St Cadog.

As with the dedications to St David, there is a significant overlap between those sited liminally or centrally and those that appear in close connection to linear routes. Along the

lowland east-west road lie Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon, Llanedern and Cadoxton juxta Neath and along the Usk valley road lie Llangattock-nigh-Usk, Llanspyddid and Llangatog. Gelligaer lies along the north road from Cardiff. There are also two St Illtud dedications on the east-west road at Ewenny Priory and Llantwit-juxta-Neath and on the Usk valley road at Capel Illtud and Llanhamlach. Only dedications associated with the cult of St Teilo in the south-east seem to have any correlation with the Roman roads. Llantilio Pertholey lies on the road north from Caerleon. The two later dedications to St Teilo at Llandaf and Merthyr Mawr lie on the east-west road.

There is a very limited correlation between the dedications and secular estates. Llanilltud Fawr had a strong relationship with Llysworney, as has already been discussed. The cult of St Cadog is the only one with any significant connection with secular estates. Llanspyddid was linked to the ruling dynasty of Brycheiniog at Brecon. There was a court at Gelligaer throughout the early medieval period. Bassaleg and St Woolo's were both associated with the cult of St Cadog and were each at different times the main foundation associated with the ruling family of Gwynllwg.¹²⁸

Bowen suggested that many of the foundations of the saints of south Wales had Roman connections, either with Roman roads, forts or settlements.¹²⁹ The relation of many dedications to the old Roman roads has been noted above. Several St Cadog dedications are associated with Roman forts. Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon is by the legionary fortress at Isca. Gelligaer, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath and Llanspyddid all lie near to Roman forts.¹³⁰ There is some relation between Roman villas and early foundations. Llandough and Llanilltud Fawr are both located near to Roman villas. This was not a continuation from the Roman period. Rather, it appears that the villa sites were used for post-roman burials.¹³¹ Carmarthen Priory, formerly the site of Llandeulyddog a St Teilo dedication that became part of the cult of St David, lies just outside the walls of Carmarthen by the Roman road.¹³² There are several sites associated with the old Roman roads, but as many of them corresponded with the major route ways in Wales and continued to be used for a long time after the Roman period, this association does not mark a strong Roman connection, more a connection with route ways. Only the cult of St Cadog seems to have had dedications with other Roman connections, but

¹²⁸ Knight, 'Society and Religion', p. 277; Knight, *South Wales*, p 91.

¹²⁹ Bowen, *The Settlements of the Celtic Saints*, pp. 39-40, 41, 44, 56-57, 58.

¹³⁰ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

¹³² James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 68.

as noted it seems more likely that these locations were chosen because they were at major crossroads rather than for any Roman association. This does seem to suggest that there was no marked connection of the saints' cults of south Wales and the Roman past.¹³³

The boundaries of the medieval cantrefi of south Wales were very often based on natural boundaries, most often rivers. If the dedications of each of the saints' cults of south Wales is compared with the location of rivers and waterways an interesting picture emerges. Map 14 shows the correlation between dedications and rivers. As can be seen there is a much higher correlation between the courses of rivers and the location of dedications than any of the other categories already considered. Nearly every dedication in south Wales lies close to a river. Rivers would have been important to medieval foundations, not just for a supply of fresh water, but also for fishing. In the *Life of St Cadog* Llanmaes is mentioned in order to emphasise the rights Llanancarfan had to fishing at the site.¹³⁴ Some foundations also lie at key fording points, like Llawhaden and Meidrim, which would have made them key points on routeways.¹³⁵ Rivers and springs appear in the hagiography of all the principal saints of south Wales. Rivers feature heavily in the *Life of St Illtud*, who flees his monastery to live beside them on two occasions.¹³⁶ Even the early cult of St Dyfrig may have had connections to a river as one features in the story of his birth.¹³⁷

However, it appears that many foundations were not just located close to rivers because of the convenience they provided: Map 15 (St Cadog and St Illtud dedications) and Map 16 (St Teilo and St David dedications) clearly show that many dedications to a saint follow the course of certain rivers and their tributaries. There are five St Cadog foundations that lie on the River Usk: St Woolo's, Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon, Llangattock Nigh Usk, Llangattock and Llanspyddid. Llancadle lies to the north of the Kenson River, which joins to Nant Llanancarfan. Several St Illtud dedications lie beside rivers, but only two groups follow the course of rivers. Llanhamlach and Llanilltyd both follow the course of the River Usk. Capel Illtud lies on a tributary to the Usk, Nant y Llest. Llanharry, Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre all form a group related to the River Ely and its tributaries. Llanharry appears not to have any correlation with a river. However, the geography of the surrounding landscape suggests that a

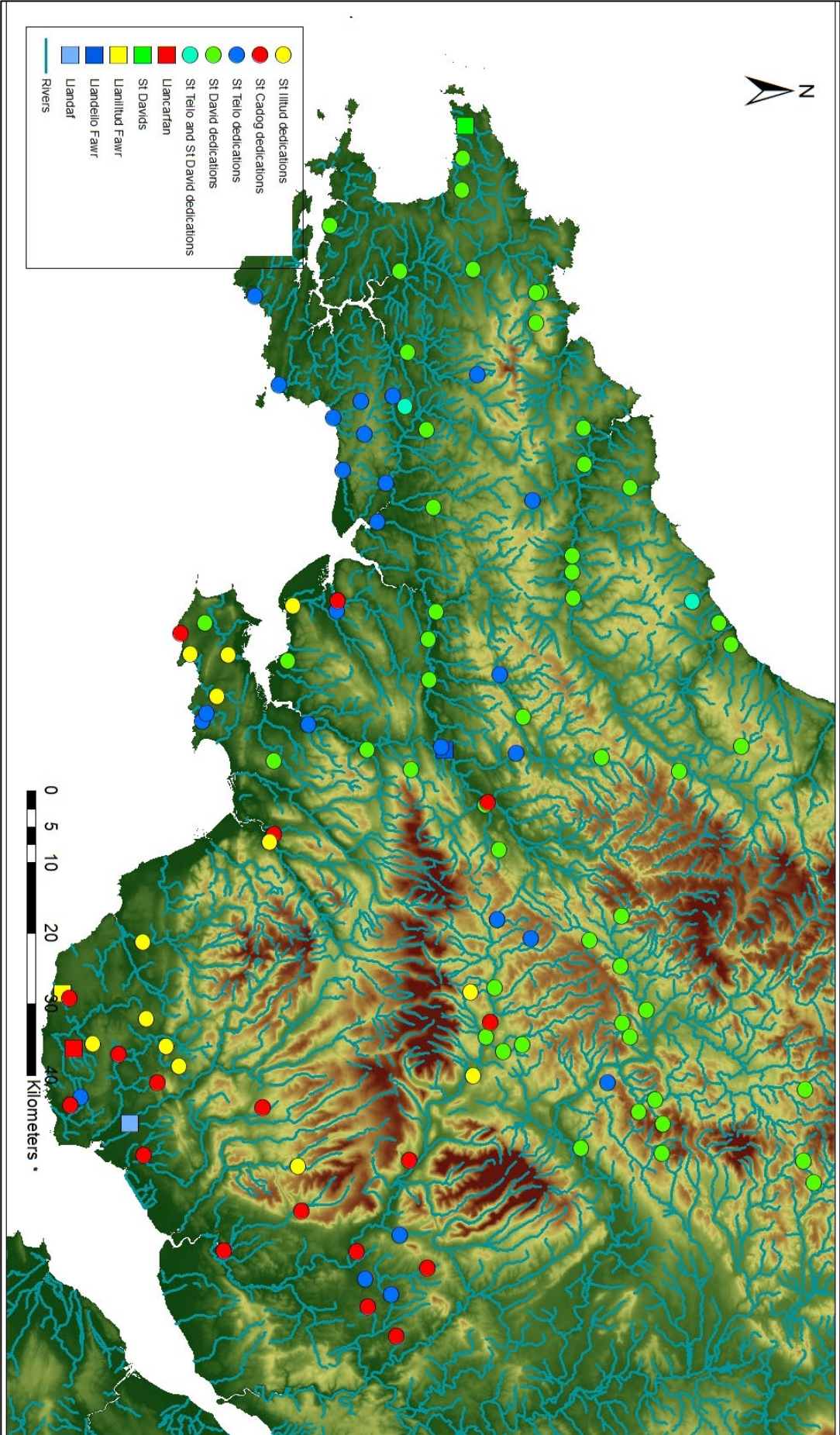
¹³³ Knight, *South Wales*, p. 91.

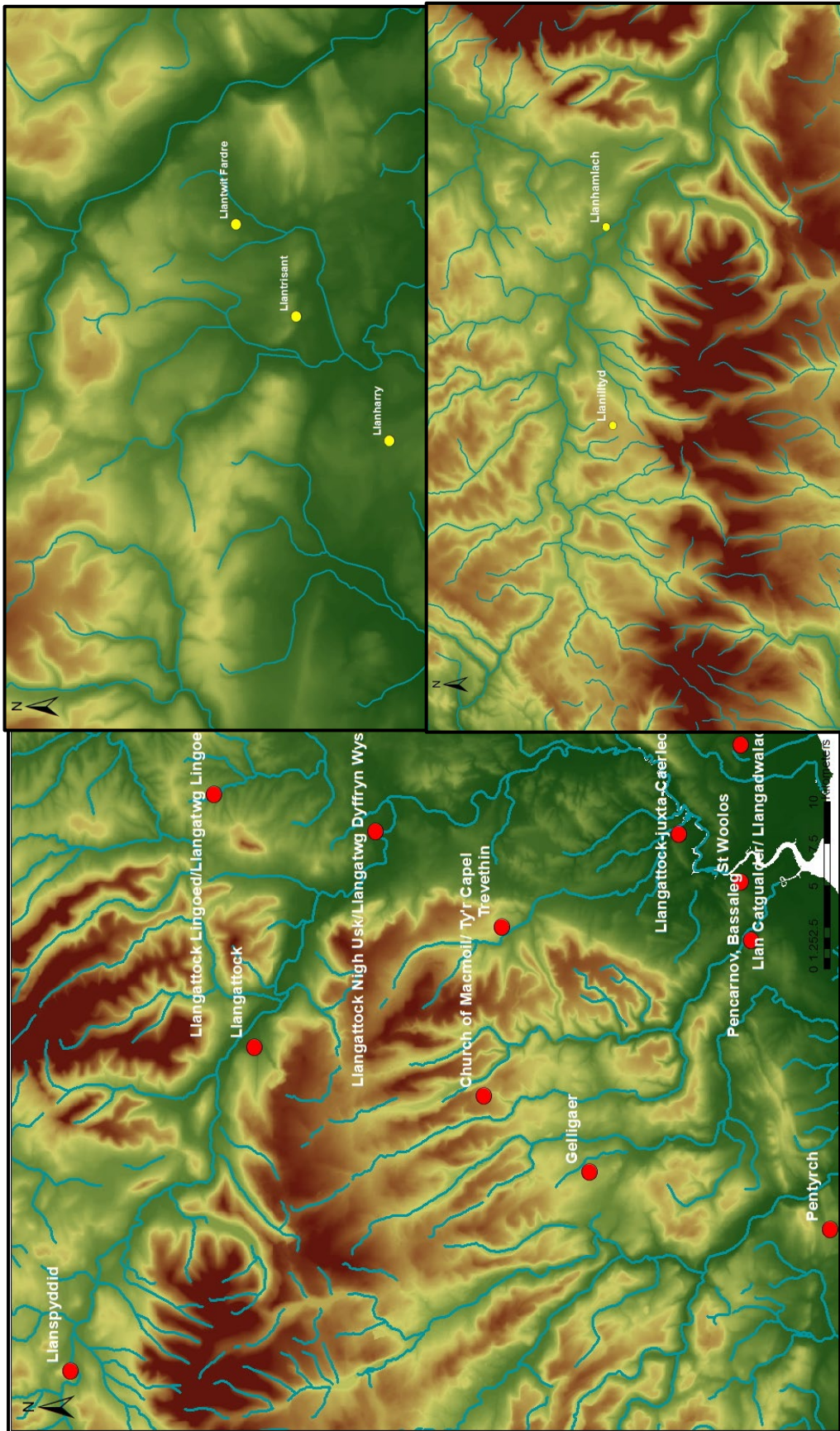
¹³⁴ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §24.

¹³⁵ James, 'The geography of the cult of St David', p. 82.

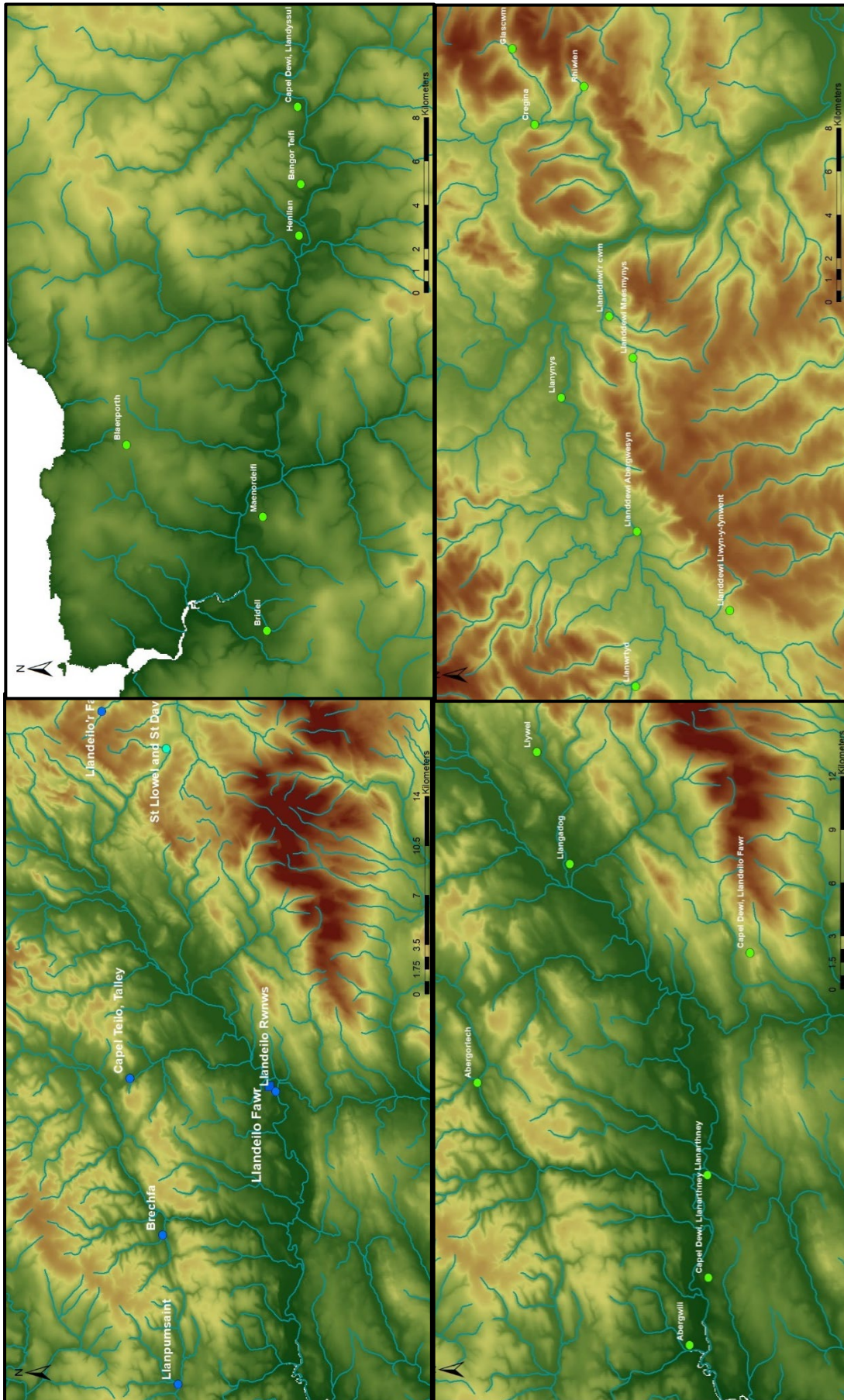
¹³⁶ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§18, 21.

¹³⁷ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §14.





Map 15 St Cadog dedications on the River Usk; St Illtud dedications on the River Usk; St Illtud Dedications on the River Ely



Map 16 St Teilo dedications on the River Tywi; St David dedications on the River Teifi; St David dedications on the River Tywi; St David dedications on the River Wye

tributary to the River Ely used to flow closer to it, Nant Felin Fach. Llantrisant lies at the confluence of the River Clun and the River Ely. Llantwit Fardre lies on Nant Dowlais, a tributary of the River Clun. The cult of St Teilo only has one main cluster of dedications that are related to a river, but importantly they seem to be grouped around Llandeilo Fawr and the River Tywi. Brechfa, Llywel and Capel Teilo, Talley are all found on tributaries of the River Tywi: Brechfa on the River Cothi, Llywel on Nant Gwydderig and Capel Teilo on the River Dulais. The cult of St David has several groups of foundations corresponding with river routes. Maenordeifi, Henllan, Bangor Teifi and Capel all lie on the River Teifi and Blaenporth and Bridell lie on two tributaries of the river. Capel Dewi, Llanarthney lies on the River Tywi, and Abergwili Capel Dewi, at Llandeilo Fawr, St Davids Dolhowell and Llywel lie on its tributaries. There is a large group that lie on separate tributaries of the River Wye. Rhiwlen and Cregina lie on the River Edw, a tributary of the River Wye. Glasgwm lies on the Clas Brook, a tributary of the River Edw. Llanddewi'r Cwm and Llanddewi Maesmynys are both on the Dunhonw River, another tributary of the River Wye. Llanynys, Llanddewi Abergwesyn and Llanwrtyd all lie on the Irfon River, a third tributary of the River Wye. Llanddewi Llwyn-y-fynwent is on the River Dulas, a tributary of the Irfon River.

This is not to suggest that all foundations in medieval south Wales were located by rivers. Map 14 clearly shows there are several exceptions. Gelligaer, for example, is not sited near a river, and the site was probably chosen for the connections to the royal court there. Similarly, not all the foundations that lie by a river were located there because of association with a river. The many foundations in the Usk valley were most likely situated there because the road followed the River Usk: this would have been a major routeway, with an important crossroads, rather than because they lay on the river. The groups that lie around river routes suggest that natural routeways were important. Many roads follow the natural landscape, and the positions of some of these foundations does suggest that in the early medieval period people were using the paths of rivers as major routeways. This also helps to show how some cults developed in an area: members of the *familia* of a foundation would leave to found daughter sites and followed the path of the river. For example, members of the *familia* of St Teilo clearly set out from Llandeilo Fawr and headed both upstream and downstream to find areas to create new foundations as part of the cult of St Teilo. It may be that these sites were originally intended as retreats from the main monastery at Llandeilo Fawr, in the same way that St Illtud retreated to a cave on the banks of the Ewenny to seek solitude in the *Life of St*

Illtud.¹³⁸ It is clear that the sites of these monastic foundations were chosen due to their proximity to certain rivers, both because they were a natural resource essential for the daily life of the inhabitants and also because the sites were gained by following the rivers from more central locations.

Inscribed stone monuments are found in association with all the major saints' cults of south Wales. Although the stones that survive at these sites may not reflect the exact number of stones that were originally erected there, whether through stones being moved or lost, the ones that remain can help to highlight the periods of success that different cults experienced through the early medieval period. An analysis of the date and frequency that the stones were erected at each of the principal foundations reflects the development of the overall cults. Llancarfan has only one inscribed stone that was erected in the ninth to tenth centuries but received extra decoration in the eleventh to twelfth centuries.¹³⁹ There are ten inscribed stone monuments associated with St Davids, the earliest from the sixth century, and then an absence of any stones erected until the early ninth century, with stones erected from this period right into the twelfth century.¹⁴⁰ At Llanilltud Fawr there were nine stones erected over the early medieval period. The first stone was erected in the eighth century and as with St Davids stones were erected at the site regularly right into the twelfth century.¹⁴¹ There are four stones at Llandeilo Fawr, the earliest dating to the sixth century and the last to the ninth century. Llandaf has five stones from the period examined, the first from the tenth century, going through to the twelfth century. These stones are plotted on Figure 1. This graph shows clearly that each of these cults developed at different periods, with peaks of success at different times and growth at different rates. Llancarfan remained quite minor until the ninth century and began to gain some success into the tenth and eleventh centuries, but it declined into the twelfth century. The cult of St David enjoyed early success, but did not begin to really gain power until the eighth century and it enjoyed steady success through the rest of the period, though declining slightly in the eleventh century, a phenomenon which has been noted.¹⁴² The cult of St Illtud also enjoyed early success, though slightly later than the cult of St David, growing in power into the tenth century, but slowly declining from that point

¹³⁸ *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §18.

¹³⁹ Redknapp & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 319-20.

¹⁴⁰ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 427-46.

¹⁴¹ Redknapp & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 369-96.

¹⁴² Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p.

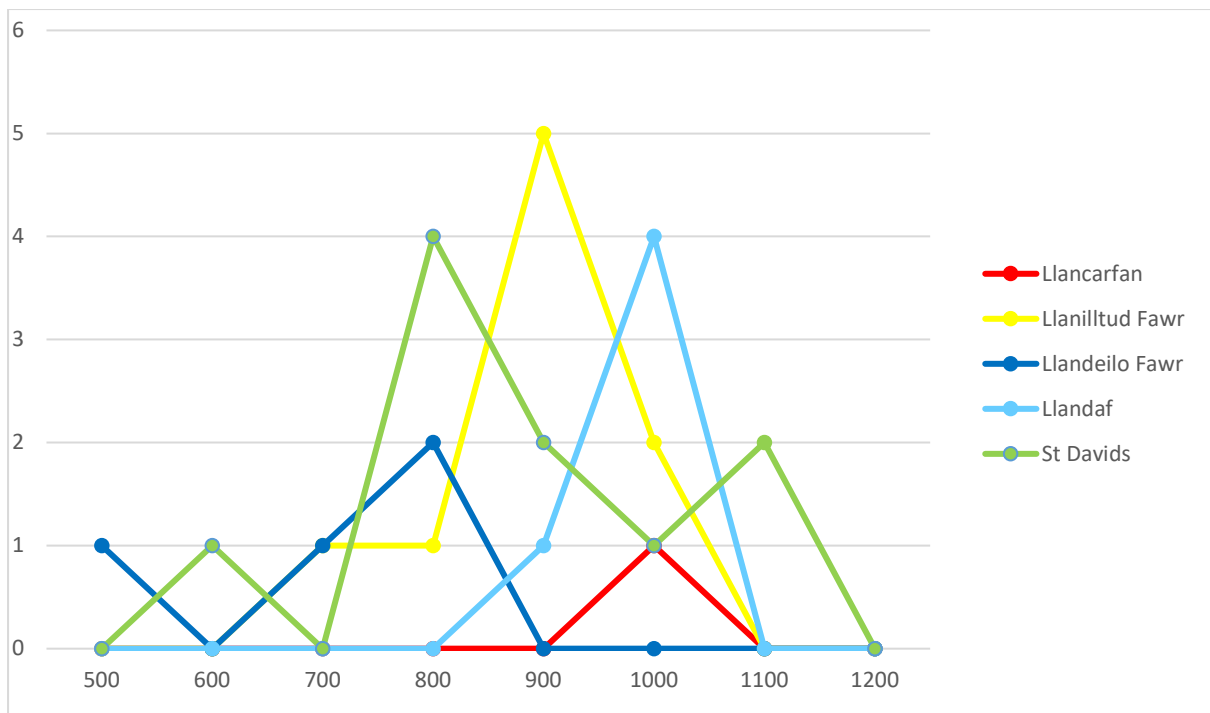


Figure 1 The date and frequency of inscribed stone monuments erected at Llanancarfan, Llandaf, Llandeilo Fawr, Llanilltud Fawr and St Davids

onwards. The development of the cult of St Teilo is shown well by the periods of inscribed stone erection. At Llandeilo Fawr the cult enjoyed some success from the seventh century onwards, peaking in the ninth century, and declining from the tenth century. Llandaf began to develop as a successful site from the same period that Llandeilo Fawr began to decline, gaining great success in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The fact that these foundations continued throughout the period might suggest that they followed a similar pattern of development. However, it can clearly be seen that each saints' cult developed at different periods, with a different cult dominant in each century of the early medieval period.

The periods that inscribed stone monuments were erected in foundations across the different cults also reflects the way they developed, showing how and when they began to expand. The inscribed stones associated with each of the cults discussed have already been addressed in detail in each individual chapter, so will not be repeated here. For the cult of St Cadog stones were erected between the eighth and ninth centuries at Llanancarfan, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Llanspyddid and Gelligaer. Further stones and inscriptions were added in the tenth to eleventh centuries at Llanancarfan, Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Llanspyddid, Caerwent and

Llangattock-juxta-Caerleon.¹⁴³ This suggests that the cult began to expand in this later period, with dedications further east in the cult of St Cadog gaining more importance.

The cult of St David saw some stones erected in the area of St Davids and at Nevern in the sixth century. From the seventh to ninth centuries stones were erected at the Chapel of St Non, St Ishmaels and Nevern. Between the ninth and tenth centuries several stones were erected at St Davids and in the local area, and at St Ishmaels. In the tenth to twelfth centuries stones were erected at St Davids and in the local area, and at Nevern.¹⁴⁴ This reflects that the cult of St David was important from the sixth century, but that St Davids itself did not become a major site until the ninth century. It also shows that while the cult of St David expanded across Dyfed and south-west Wales, there was a core group of foundations that remained important to the cult.

The first foundation in the cult of St Illtud with an inscribed stone was Llanrhidian in the sixth century. Stones were erected at Llanilltud Fawr, Llantrisant, Llantwit-juxta-Neath and Ewenny in the period from the seventh century to the ninth century. From the tenth to eleventh centuries stones were erected at Llanilltud Fawr, Llantwit-juxta-Neath, Ewenny, Llanhamlach and Llanrhidian. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries stones were erected at Llanilltud Fawr and Ewenny.¹⁴⁵ This suggests that Llanilltud Fawr, Llantwit-juxta-Neath and Ewenny remained the major foundations of the cult of St Illtud in the period: these three continued to gain inscribed stone monuments throughout the period. The fact that a stone was erected in Llanrhidian in the sixth century and then no further stone were erected until the tenth century suggests that the site may have been reculted as part of the cult of St Illtud in the later period. This suggests that the cult of St Illtud was probably expanding in the tenth century, gaining new properties at Llanrhidian and possibly Llanhamlach.

The stones found at sites associated with St Teilo perfectly reflect the success and decline of the cult in west Wales and the reculting of it at Llandaf in the south-east. In the sixth century stones were erected at Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Llwydarth and Merthyr Mawr. Between the seventh and ninth centuries stones were erected at Llandeilo Fawr, Llandeilo Llwydarth, Penally, Llandeilo Talybont and Llanpumsaint. From the ninth to tenth centuries stones were erected at Penally and Llanddowror. In the tenth to twelfth centuries stones were erected at

¹⁴³ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 222-4, 270-6 309-10, 319-20, 503-4, 505.

¹⁴⁴ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, 390-407, 427-6, 449-50, 451-9, 484-9.

¹⁴⁵ Redknap & Lewis, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, pp. 210-14, 294-301, 362-66, 366-7, 368, 369-96.

Llandaf and Merthyr Mawr. At the beginning of the period Llandeilo Fawr and Llandeilo Llwydarth were the main foundations of the cult of St Teilo. The cult expanded during the period between the seventh and ninth centuries. There is a clear shift of the cult from the ninth century onwards. In the ninth century the focus seems to move to Penally, supporting Edward's theory that it may have been an interim home of the cult before it moved to Llandaf.¹⁴⁶ The cult of St Teilo began to gain success at Llandaf in the south-east from the tenth century onwards. As with Llanrhidian, the early dedication at Merthyr Mawr without another being erected until the tenth century suggests that there had been an early cult at the site which may have disappeared allowing the site to be reculted late in the period as a St Teilo dedication. The spread of the different cults, again, shows that the ecclesiastical landscape in south Wales in the early medieval period did not fit an overarching pattern: there was no single period of expansion, but several stages for each different cult effected by different political situations and stimuli.

Relics of the cults of south Wales

Relics were an important part of any saint's cult. They were symbols of power and prestige which drew pilgrims and patronage to the principal foundation of a saint. Relics were not only symbols of a foundation's ecclesiastical power but often also tools of secular power as well. The presence of these relics at a foundation showed the success of the cult, while the absence or removal of relics reflected its decline. There were several types of relics associated with the cults of south Wales but the main ones were bells, gospel books and altars.

The most common relic of the cults of south Wales was the bell. Bells appear in most of the Lives examined. In the *Life of St Cadog* a bell is given to the saint by St Gildas. The bell was made by St Gildas for the pope, but the bell will not ring for him after St Cadog expresses an interest in it. When the pope hears this story, he blesses the bell and sends Gildas back to Wales to give it to St Cadog.¹⁴⁷ A similar episode appears in the *Life of St Illtud*, except in this case the bell that St Gildas made was intended for St David.¹⁴⁸ St Gildas also gifts bells to St Kenan and St Brigit.¹⁴⁹ This shows the importance of St Gildas in early medieval Wales

¹⁴⁶ Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones*, p 9.

¹⁴⁷ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §27.

¹⁴⁸ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §19.

¹⁴⁹ J. Fisher, 'The Welsh Celtic Bells', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 81 (1926), p. 332.

and Ireland, which is interesting as there is no evidence of a cult to St Gildas in Wales. In the cases of St Cadog and St Illtud the form of the episodes are clearly meant to show that St Cadog was greater than the pope and that St Illtud was greater than St David. The hagiography was using these relics to highlight the status of the respective saints. An episode that appears in the Lives of St David, St Padarn and St Teilo describes how St Teilo received a bell from the patriarch of Jerusalem while on pilgrimage there.¹⁵⁰ This bell would have been important for the cult of St Teilo as a symbol of a relic from the holy city. The fact that one of the relics that appears in this story was a bell demonstrates the importance of the bell in Welsh hagiography. There are seven examples of bells still in evidence in Wales suggesting that bells were clearly a relic found across many saint's cults in Wales.¹⁵¹

Gospel books were another important relic in medieval south Wales. The most prominent example of a gospel book in Wales is the *Lichfield Gospels*. The presence of the *Lichfield Gospels* at Llandeilo Fawr demonstrates the power that the foundation had in the eighth and ninth centuries, as well as showing the powerful patrons that it had. Similarly, the removal of the gospel book highlights the declining fortunes of the foundation.¹⁵² Books also feature prominently in the hagiography. In the *Life of St Cadog* there are three separate books mentioned: the Gospels of Gildas, a book that was saved from the rain, and a book that is lost but is found in the stomach of a fish.¹⁵³ This possession of any books in this period would have demonstrated the high status of a foundation, but the implication that Llancarfan had three books suggests that Lifris was highlighting the great prosperity of Llancarfan in the late eleventh century. Books can be seen as examples of the great patronage received by foundations and reflected the status of the foundations that owned them. These books were not only symbols of the ecclesiastical power of a foundation but can also be seen as evidence that they played a secular role in the areas they were located. There is evidence in the *Lichfield Gospels* that oaths may have been sworn on the book.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, the *Life of St Cadog* contains an episode where the Gospels of Gildas were taken to court to be sworn on in a case concerning stolen oxen.¹⁵⁵ This shows that the gospel book was used in a legal

¹⁵⁰ *Vita Sancti David*, §§44-48; *Vita Sancti Paterni*, §20; *Vespasian Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §8.

¹⁵¹ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 255.

¹⁵² Davies, 'The Saints of South Wales', p. 368.

¹⁵³ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§12, 29, 34.

¹⁵⁴ Jenkins & Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia', p. 55.

¹⁵⁵ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §33.

capacity. Similar evidence is not found in the *Book of Llandaf*, a later example of a Welsh gospel book, suggesting that the practice had gone out of use by the twelfth century.

Altars were an important form of relic in medieval Wales. However, they are often overlooked in examinations of the relics of this period, possibly due to the prominence of bells and gospel books and partly due to the fact that none survive.¹⁵⁶ The hagiography clearly places an emphasis on altars. The earliest mention of a relic in Wales is an altar. This is found in the *Historia Brittonum*, which describes how a floating altar was given to St Illtud.¹⁵⁷ There are few parts of the *Historia Brittonum* that refer to saints so it must mean that this particular relic was considered to be very important in the early ninth century when it was composed. This suggests that altars may have had even greater status than bells or gospel books in this period. Altars are seen in the Lives of both St Cadog and St David. In both cases the saints are seen to bring altars back from Jerusalem. St David is gifted his by the patriarch of Jerusalem while the three altars in the *Life of St Cadog* are miraculously transported from Jerusalem to Wales for the saint.¹⁵⁸ In each of these cases the altars are seen as prestigious relics and are promoted by the hagiography. This shows the importance of altars as secondary relics in the early medieval period.

There is little evidence of the cult of corporeal relics through the early medieval period. Much of the hagiography in the twelfth century is used to explain why the foundations of the saints did not have the bodies of their saints. The *Life of St Cadog* has a very detailed section at the end of the Life that describes St Cadog travelling to Beneventum and being buried there when he died.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, the *Life of St Illtud* describes him travelling to Dol and being buried there in order to explain why his body was not present at Llanilltud Fawr.¹⁶⁰ The *Llandaf Life of St Teilo* suggests that Llandeilo Fawr, Penally and Llandaf all claimed to have the body of St Teilo.¹⁶¹ The fact that the three foundations all claimed to have the body suggests that these claims were only made late in the period, when the three foundations were still competing to be the principal foundation of St Teilo. The use of the body of St Teilo to gain status suggests that this episode was heavily influenced by the Norman presence in England and Wales which had led to a new focus on the cult of bodily relics. The response to

¹⁵⁶ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', pp. 225-65.

¹⁵⁷ *Historia Brittonum*, §71.

¹⁵⁸ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§14-15; *Vita Sancti David*, §48.

¹⁵⁹ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§37-9.

¹⁶⁰ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §24.

¹⁶¹ *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Teiliaui*, §18.

this new cult of relics in Wales of Bishop Urban at Llandaf was to have the supposed bones of St Dyfrig translated from Bardsey and brought to Llandaf. This is described in detail at the end of the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig* along with a number of miracles associated with the bones.¹⁶² This all suggests that there was no real interest in corporeal relics for most of the early medieval period in south Wales, and that this only changed in the second half of the eleventh century because of new Norman influence.¹⁶³

¹⁶² *Liber Landavensis Vita Sancti Dubricii*, §19.

¹⁶³ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 238; A. Evans, 'The Levitating Altar of St Illtud', *Folklore* 122.1 (2011), pp. 59-61.

Cults of South Wales in an Insular context

The ecclesiastical culture of Wales in the early Middle Ages is often compared to the cultures of its Insular neighbours in Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and England. There are many similarities between the cultures and societies of the Insular world. Some of these similarities are universal in reference to saints' cults: success of a cult was heavily dependent on patronage and property across Europe in this period, and not peculiar to saint's cults within these countries. However, the different ecclesiastical, political and social cultures in these countries meant that the saints' cults from these areas developed differently to the rest of the western Europe. The similarities between these areas have often led them to be all considered in the same light. However, it is important to recognise that there were also clear differences between them.

The similarities and differences between south-Wales and the rest of the Insular world can be shown by a comparison of the ecclesiastical culture of south-Wales with Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and England. This chapter will compare certain aspects of the saints' cults of south Wales with the same aspects in ecclesiastical landscape of these countries, with specific focus on a number of their principal saints' cults: the cults of St Patrick and St Columba in Ireland and Scotland, the cult of St Samson in Brittany and the cult of St Cuthbert in England. A single cult from a country cannot reflect the way in which all saints' cults in the area developed, but the limited scope of this thesis does not allow for deeper examination. Instead, this chapter hopes to merely demonstrate that there were differences between the saints' cults of the Insular world and to highlight that these should be considered more prominently in studies that examine the saints' cults of south Wales alongside those of its Insular neighbours. The cult of St Patrick was based at Armagh. The principal *Life of St Patrick* was composed by Muirchú Moccu Macthéni during the late seventh century.¹ The cult of St Columba was based at Iona, an island in Dál Riata, with other powerful foundations in Ireland, such as Durrow. Adomnán, a relative of St Columba and abbot of Iona, composed the *Life of St Columba* in the late seventh century.² The cult of St Samson in Brittany was based in Dol, and the *Life of St Samson* is assigned to the seventh century, though it was probably based on earlier sources.³ In England, the cult of St Cuthbert was based at Lindisfarne in Northumbria.

¹ T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 254.

² *Ibid.*, p. 283.

³ See Introduction for further discussion of the *Life of St Samson*.

There are two *Lives of St Cuthbert*, an anonymous one composed between 698 and 705 and a second by Bede composed in c.720.⁴ This chapter will mainly focus on the first anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert*, as the earliest rendition of the material. It is very clear that the Welsh hagiographical sources are much later in date than the Irish, Breton and English hagiography. This means that these sources can show much more about the actual saints and the early period of the cults than the Welsh material is able to. This provides an interesting contrast between how the saint's cults of Wales are examined and the way those of Ireland, Brittany and England are studied.

Relationships

There was a clear emphasis placed on familial connections in Welsh saints' cults. As discussed above the principal foundations of all the main saints' cults of south Wales created relationships between their saints and the major dynasties of medieval Wales and even with the Roman past. This phenomenon is not seen to the same extent in the cults of the other Insular nations. The mother of St Máedhóg of Fern was of the Uí Amalgaid and his father was of the Uí Moccu, making him part of the tribe of the Airgialla, rulers of a large overkingdom of medieval Ireland.⁵ The cult of St Columba shows some promotion of the saint's connection to the Uí Néill, the ruling family of an area of Ireland that covers most of modern Co. Donegal.⁶ Adomnán's *Life of St Columba* introduces his connection to the family in the second preface, where his parents are described as Fedilmid and Eithne, daughter of Mac Naue. Fedilmid was one of the Cenél Conaill, a branch of the Uí Néill.⁷ In the genealogies Eithne is connected to several different dynasties. This confusion in the genealogies is a result of an attempt by prominent families in Ireland to ally themselves with Iona, rather than Iona trying to promote connections with important families.⁸ This is not individual to the cult of St Columba. Many dynasties in Ireland chose to align themselves with prominent saints in order to gain or maintain status. The Fotharta, for example, claimed St Brigit as their patron saint and so were able to continue to hold power at Kildare, despite

⁴ A. Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', in G. Bonner, D Rollason & C. Stancliffe (eds.), *St Cuthbert, his cult and his community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 115, 118.

⁵ C. Doherty, 'The transmission of the cult of St Máedhóg' in P. Ni Chatáin & M. Richter, (eds.) *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: text and transmission* (Dublin, 2002), p. 268.

⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 282.

⁷ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, Second preface.

⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 290-91.

the dynasty declining politically.⁹ This suggests that the situation in Ireland was the opposite of that in south Wales: the Welsh saints' cults actively tried to create connections with powerful rulers to gain status, and in Ireland rulers were trying to gain status and legitimacy through a connection to a saint and their foundation.

However, this is not true of all the saints' cults in Ireland. The seventh-century *Life of St Patrick* by Muirchú does not include a genealogy of the saint, merely showing that his father was a deacon.¹⁰ This suggests a greater focus on giving the saint a more holy parentage rather than a political one. As his parents were from Britain and their connections unknown, there were not the same attempts of rulers to ally themselves with the cult of St Patrick by claiming a relation. This is similar to the situation of the family of St Illtud. St Illtud, as discussed above, was originally from Brittany, so his parents would not have been important to those in Wales when the saint was active. The main difference between these cults is that by the twelfth century the status of the cult of St Illtud was low enough that those at Llanilltud Fawr chose to fabricate a genealogy for the saint, linking him to Arthur to give him greater prestige, while Armagh, the main foundation of the cult of St Patrick, remained a powerful institution with no need to create a connection to any past rulers.

Smaller cults, like that of St Cainnech, had to actively create links with the ruling family where the principal monastery of the saint was located. The *Life of St Cainnech* shows the saint saving the life of the king when the *princeps*, the head of the church of the area, could not. This helped Aghaboe, the main foundation of St Cainnech to gain greater status than the main church of the kingdom, and ensured the cult received continued patronage, seen in the fact that the later cathedral of the kingdom was dedicated to St Cainnech.¹¹ This is much more akin to the way relationships with rulers were promoted in the Welsh hagiography, where encounters with rulers led to the confirmation of privileges and grants. The main difference seems to be that even the major Welsh cults employed both tactics of promoting their saints' familial relationships with ruling dynasties and included encounters with rulers in the hagiography to suggest a historical basis for patronage, while even minor Irish saints' cults only required one or the other.

⁹ D. Ó Corráin, 'The Early Irish Churches: Some Aspects of Organisation' in D. Ó Corráin (ed.), *Irish Antiquity* (Cork, 1981), pp. 328-9.

¹⁰ Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, §I.1.

¹¹ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 262-3.

The early medieval Breton hagiography does emphasise that the saints were from noble stock, but not as a link to any important ruling dynasties. The *Life of St Samson* begins by stating that both of Samson's parents were 'distinguished and noble'.¹² His father was Amon from Dyfed and his mother was Anna from Gwent and his grandparents were officials of the courts of each kingdom.¹³ There are no other genealogical details for the family. The same pattern of noble birth without specific details is followed in later ninth-century Breton hagiography, like the *Life of St Maglorious* and the *Life of St Paul Aurélian*.¹⁴ The lack of any attempt in these Lives to create genealogical links with ruling dynasties may be because the saints that they were concerned with were in a similar situation to St Illtud and St Patrick: the cults of those saints were not in the country of their birth and there was no direct advantage for their foundations in Brittany to be gained by fabricating a relationship between them and any ruling dynasties in Wales. The saints clearly gain some status from being of noble birth, but in a more general way than in the Welsh hagiography.

The emphasis in the Breton hagiography appears more to distance the saint from secular positions and to encourage all relations to undertake an ecclesiastical life instead. Nearly the entire family of St Samson dedicate themselves to God. His father, mother, siblings, uncle, aunt and cousins all take up monastic living.¹⁵ The inclusion of his family in the hagiography seems more an attempt on the composer's part to explain why so many members of his family ended up as heads of monasteries founded by the saint in Ireland, Wales and Cornwall.¹⁶ This corresponds with many instances in the Welsh hagiography where family members of a saint become the heads of different foundations. St Cadog's parents both leave their secular lives and take up religious ones, becoming the patron saints of St Woolos and Bassaleg.¹⁷ St Teilo's nephews, SS. Tyfei and Ishmael both had churches dedicated to them.¹⁸ While the inclusion of family members in this way appears similar in the hagiography of both countries, the motivations behind them are quite different. In Wales it was used to validate the claims of the principal foundations of the cults to the churches dedicated to these family members, as with Llancarfan's claims to St Woolos and Bassaleg.

¹² *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §I.1.

¹³ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §I.1.

¹⁴ C. Brett, 'Soldiers, Saints, and States? The Breton Migrations Revisited', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 61 (2011), p. 23.

¹⁵ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§I.29-I.31, I.52.

¹⁶ R. Sowerby, 'A Family and its Saint in the *Vita Prima Samsonis*' in L. Olsen (ed.), *St Samson of Dol and the earliest history of Brittany, Cornwall and Wales* (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 34

¹⁷ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §

¹⁸ *Liber Landavensis Vita Beati Oudocei*, §1; see above for further discussion of Welsh family members who have foundations dedicated to them.

In the case of the cult of St Samson the hagiographer is instead seeking to demonstrate that these churches actually were headed by members of the saint's family. The hagiographer is attempting to distance St Samson from any accusations of nepotism, and presumably distance Dol from any accusations of this practice. This suggests a very different culture within the Breton Church than within the Welsh Church, where nepotism seems to have been a feature from the sixth century right through to the eleventh century. The nephews of St Illtud presumed that they would be the successors to his monastery in the *Life of St Samson*.¹⁹ In the eleventh century Bishop Sulien educated his sons at St Davids and his son, Rhygyfarch, became a clerk at Llanbadarn Fawr. Family members holding positions within a saints' cult does not seem to have been a problem in Wales as it was in Brittany.

There are no mentions of any familial connections of St Cuthbert with any Anglo-Saxon rulers, or any mentions of who his family members were at all in either of the two early medieval Lives of the saint. There could be an argument that giving St Cuthbert a noble family would detract from the ascetic portrayal of the saint, but there are many mentions of rulers with whom the saint has close relationships, so this would not make sense. It may be that the two Lives were written within living memory of the saint, so it would have been clear that any family created for him was false. This is very different from Wales, where the genealogies of the saints were composed centuries after the lifetimes of the saints and so their foundations were easily able to create illustrious ancestries for them. The fact that St Cuthbert had no royal relations should not be seen as the general trend for Anglo-Saxon saints. There were many royal saints across England during the Anglo-Saxon period. Kings who were patrons of monasteries often became venerated by the monks after their deaths.²⁰ Cults to kings were not widespread, as they often had bloody reputations, but there are many examples of cults to princesses and noble women.²¹ The holy reputation of princesses can easily be seen in the portrayal of Aelfflaed, the sister of King Oswald who was a nun in the *Life of St Cuthbert*.²² As shown above, the family ties attributed to many of the Welsh saints could have some historical basis, but are mostly probably the result of their foundations cultivating these relationships in later centuries. The prominent Anglo-Saxon cults, like that of St Cuthbert, seem not to have needed to do this as they enjoyed royal or noble patronage

¹⁹ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §I.14.

²⁰ J. Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England' in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 459; Ridyard, S.J., *The royal saints of Anglo-Saxon England: a study of West Saxon and East Anglian cults* (Cambridge, 1988)

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 460-61.

²² Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §3.6.

from their genesis. The cult of St Cuthbert had the patronage of the Northumbrian kings from the time of the foundation of Lindisfarne by St Aidan and built on that.

Episodes in the Welsh hagiography that involve interactions between the saint and a ruler, or the servants of a ruler take on particular characteristics. The ruler or servant appears as a violent or rude antagonist and acts as a foil to the saint, allowing him to show his power. The outcome is the defeat of the antagonist and either their submission or death, often followed by the rights and privileges of the saint being confirmed. These episodes act as a warning for contemporary rulers about the dangers of crossing the foundations of the saint and their heads, the representatives of the saint on earth. This is not so obvious in the hagiography of Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and England. The clearest example of a saint using power against a ruler is seen in the *Life of St Patrick*. He shows his power against the king of Tara and his druids in a number of tests until the druids are destroyed and the king agrees to convert to Christianity.²³ This set of episodes does not serve to give St Patrick and patronage or privileges, but it does stand to show the power of the saint over the greatest of the Irish kings. In St Patrick's travels around Ireland he meets many rulers who threaten him or try to trick him and he defeats them each time. Importantly, he receives the land to build Armagh in this way. A wealthy man called Dáire wrongs the saint and is struck ill. St Patrick heals him with some blessed water. After several more exchanges Dáire finally welcomes St Patrick and gives him the land of Armagh to build his monastery.²⁴ This is similar in theme to how some of the Welsh saints gained the land for their monasteries or had the properties confirmed in the hagiography. The most similar circumstances are seen in the *Life of St David* where the ruler Boia and his men are stuck with sickness when they try and attack the saint, and after blaspheming against God and St David they find all their cattle have also been struck with illness. The animals are healed when Boia begs for mercy from St David and grants him all the lands of *Vallis Rosina*.²⁵ Similar exchanges result in Paulinus granting St Cadog the valley of Llancarfan and King Meirchion granting the Hodnant Valley to St Illtud.²⁶

The *Life of St Columba* also uses episodes with rulers to show the power of the saint, though in a less direct way. In a series of episodes the saint is crossed and then predicts the death of the wrongdoer.²⁷ In this way Adomnán shows the danger of crossing the saint, and therefore

²³ Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, §§I.16-I.17, I.19.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, §I.24.

²⁵ *Vita Sancti David*, §19.

²⁶ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §8; *Vita Sancti Illuti*, §§8-10.

²⁷ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §§II.23-II.25.

the foundations of his cult. Significantly, one of the episodes concerns a soldier who had been attacking churches, which further highlights Admornán's desire to promote the sanctity of religious properties. The import of this in Wales has already been discussed above. The inclusion of such episodes in the *Life of St Columba* suggests that while the cult of St Columba had great power it was still concerned with the defilement of ecclesiastical properties. This is unsurprising in the politically changing landscape of seventh-century Ireland, and mirrors the situation in eleventh-century Wales when Lifris wrote similar episodes for his *Life of St Cadog*.

The importance of royal grants of land and privileges is clearly seen in the *Life of St Samson*. Such episodes do not occur during the saint's time in Britain and Ireland, but it is the main theme of the episodes once he arrives in Brittany. Of the ten episodes of the *Life* that are set in Brittany seven are concerned with establishing his relationship with King Childebert of the Franks. The episodes give the saint the opportunity to show his power in different ways to awe and cast fear into the king and his court. The author uses the encounters to show that the king is both pleased with the saint for killing a large serpent for him, but also 'smitten with fear' at his power.²⁸ The composer also ensures to say that the king granted the lands for St Samson's monastery of Pental on the Seine, and also gave to the saint any estates and privileges that he wished for.²⁹ St Samson does not punish the king or any of his followers in the same way that the Welsh saints are seen to do, but the result is the same: he receives land grants and privileges that ensure the power and safety of Dol and the other foundations of St Samson. These sections of the *Life of St Samson* concerning King Childebert are also found in much of the ninth-century Breton hagiography. Saints such as St Winwaloe and St Malo use encounters with the early Frankish king to confirm their rights against Carolingian incursions into Brittany during this period.³⁰ The *Life of St Cadog* has episodes to ensure protections against Gwynedd.³¹ This appears to be a theme common across Wales, Ireland and Brittany.

The situation in England appears to be slightly different in character. Rather than promoting the power of the saint over rulers for grants and to ensure protections and privileges actual friendships between rulers and saints seem to be engendered. The *Life of St Cuthbert* highlights a relationship of mutual respect between St Cuthbert and King Ecgrith and

²⁸ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§I.53-I.59.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, §I.59.

³⁰ Brett, 'Soldiers, Saints, and States?', pp. 24-5.

³¹ Lifris, *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, §§23-25.

members of his family. Aelfflaed, the king's sister, is able to ask St Cuthbert difficult questions about the death of her brother and he answers her honestly, suggesting an open relationship between them.³² It is he who lets the queen know when Ecgfrith dies in battle and who blesses her when she chooses to become a nun afterwards.³³ This episode from the first *Life of St Cuthbert* is embellished and expanded on by Bede, suggesting he considered it important to emphasise the way that St Cuthbert was relied upon by the Northumbrian rulers. The hagiography also includes episodes where the saint goes to the homes of important Northumbrian *gesiths* and heals the wife of one and the servant of another.³⁴ The hagiography is trying to highlight that Lindisfarne had the support of the royal house and leading political figures of Northumbria, so that it could be promoted as the main saint's cult of the kingdom.³⁵ This is quite different to the approach of Welsh hagiography. The Welsh saints' Lives rely more on an atmosphere of fear and submission to remind rulers what they owe to the saint, also seen in the Irish and Breton Lives, while the cult of St Cuthbert seems to be encouraging a relationship of equals between Lindisfarne and the kings of Northumbria, relying on their historically close relationship to ensure their prime position in the kingdom: it is cajoling approach rather than one demanding submission.

While the cult of St Cuthbert may differ in its approach to relationships with rulers, it is clear that Lindisfarne enjoyed the patronage of kings and powerful nobles throughout the early medieval period. King Oswald of Northumbria requested that Aidan, the founder of Lindisfarne, come to Northumbria from Iona and he lived at court for some years.³⁶ The cult of St Cuthbert became one of the most successful cults in England. The cults of St Columba and St Patrick were headed by two of the most prominent foundations of medieval Ireland. These were all cults that had royal patronage from the outset of the foundations. This reflects the situation found in south Wales, where those cults with genuine patronage became successful and survived into the central Middle Ages.³⁷ The main difference is seen in the way these cults developed this patronage through the period. By the end of the eleventh century the great Irish monasteries like Armagh and Iona had developed into great institutions, with power, status and impressive wealth.³⁸ Similarly, the great foundations in

³² Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §3.6.

³³ Ibid., §4.8; Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§27-8.

³⁴ Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§4.3, 4.7.

³⁵ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 117.

³⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 283.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 306; Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 103.

³⁸ Ó Corráin, 'The Early Irish Churches', pp. 334-5.

England like the community of St Cuthbert had become the great minsters of medieval England.³⁹ Both the Irish and English great foundations had become effectively self-sufficient, with the lands and wealth to support themselves. This was not the case in south Wales, where the main monastic foundations were still clearly dependent on the patronage of the rulers around them. When the patrons of Llandeilo Fawr were lost due to the expansion of the kingdom of Deheubarth in the early eleventh century the cult was forced to move to Llandaf and the previous centre of the cult of St Teilo was lost. Llandeilo Fawr was clearly dependent on the patronage it had received to maintain its status.

Relationships between different saints were important for the development of saints' cults in Wales. They represented alliances between cults and showed how minor cults were subsumed by larger ones. The relationships promoted by Adomnán in his *Life of St Columba* appear to have been mostly of this former type. The saints who appear in the hagiography were important Irish saints in their own rights which suggests that Iona was trying to promote the relationships it had established with other Irish foundations.⁴⁰ This is most easily seen in the episodes where St Columba visits Clonmacnoise, the principal foundation of the cult of St Ciarán. This section shows that he was very welcome at the monastery, suggesting that the hagiography was reflecting a genuine relationship between the two cults.⁴¹ This is similar to the situation in south Wales during the period between the seventh and ninth centuries. As discussed above, during this period there was a genuine relationship between Llandeilo Fawr and St Davids, and between the monasteries of Llanilltud Fawr, Llancarfan and Llandough. These close friendships between the Irish and Western Scottish foundations in the time of Adomnán did not last, in much the same way that they did not in Wales. However, the turn towards competition between the Irish foundations was much more violent than anything recorded in Wales. From the eighth century there was active warfare between the major foundations within Ireland. Ruling families were so entwined with the religious foundations that battles between kingdoms included battles between foundations. Even though the *Life of St Columba* had suggested a friendship between the cults of St Columba and St Ciarán, there was at least one major battle recorded between Durrow and Clonmacnoise in the eighth century.⁴² Even though the expansion of Deheubarth in south-west Wales led to several

³⁹ Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster?', p. 471.

⁴⁰ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 283.

⁴¹ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §§I.3-I.4.

⁴² Ó Corráin, 'The Early Irish Churches', p. 355.

churches being taken over by the cult of St David, there is no evidence for this kind of active warfare between the actual religious foundations in Wales.

The *Life of St Patrick* reflects a different aspect of the relationships promoted in hagiography. There are several figures mentioned who are described as becoming important ecclesiastical figures at later dates. For example, he meets Erc son of Daig, a soldier of the king of Tara who was sent to kill the saint but ends up converting and went on to have a church dedicated to him at Slane.⁴³ Slane was a foundation that did not belong to Armagh but acknowledged its superiority.⁴⁴ Other churches subordinate to Armagh owed tribute to the foundation, like D elbane Assail which owed hospitality to those of the community of St Patrick. Many similar privileges were claimed by Armagh in the *Tripartite Life*, which has an uncertain date of composition in the second half of the tenth century.⁴⁵ This shows a system where different churches owed different levels of submission to the cult of St Patrick. In south Wales the different saints' cults appear to have subsumed other local or rival cults rather than just demanding tributes from them during this period. There is evidence of some churches in Dyfed that were not brought into the cult of St David and instead owed renders to St Davids, as with Mathry which owed revenue to St Davids but was not reculted despite being so close by.⁴⁶ Irish saints' cults did not just create submissive relationships with other cults. The general approach of the Welsh saints' cults to subsume other minor saints' cults also occurred in Ireland. The evidence for this can be seen in the *Life of St M aedh og*, which in part was composed in order to validate taking over the foundation of a rival saint.⁴⁷ However, in Ireland independent churches and monastic foundations could actively chose to become subordinate to a powerful foundation in order to avoid being taken over by another. If a kingdom was taken over by another, as often happened during this period in Ireland, a church could bequest their church to another foundation to prevent being subjected:  Aed of Sleaty chose to become part of the familia of St Patrick rather than be taken over by Kildare when they were invaded.⁴⁸ This was not a practice which occurred in Wales, as can be seen by the way the properties of the cult of St Teilo were taken over by the cult of St David in Ystrad Tywi, despite the podum of St Teilo moving to Llandaf.

⁴³ Muirch u, *Vita Sancti Patricii*,  I.17.

⁴⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 254.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 255; Dumville, D., *St Patrick, A.D. 493-1993* (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 255-8.

⁴⁶ H. James, 'The Cult of St David in the Middle Ages', *The Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society* 7 (1996-7), p. 51.

⁴⁷ Doherty, 'The transmission of the cult of St M aedh og', p. 269.

⁴⁸ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 261.

There are few relationships evident between the Breton saints' cults during the early medieval period. The *Life of St Samson* fails to establish any links to other saints or foundations in Brittany. Teachers are often quite important in hagiography, but St Samson's two teachers, St Illtud and St Piro, are both Welsh figures.⁴⁹ There are dedications to St Illtud in Brittany, but whether they existed when the *Life of St Samson* was composed is uncertain, but there are no mentions of them in the hagiography. This may reflect the composer's desire to show the wider links of the cult, rather than just local links. The author claims to have visited St Samson's foundations in Wales and Cornwall, suggesting that there were sustained links with those foundations mentioned in the hagiography in Britain which the composer considered more important to mention than links closer to Dol.⁵⁰ In the period that the *Life of St Samson* was composed Breton communities tended to be quite isolated, suggesting that there were few links between the ecclesiastical foundations at this time to be shown in the hagiography.⁵¹ The hagiography suggests that St Samson only had dedications at Dol and Pental at the time it was composed. Similarly, St Winwaloe only had dedications at Landévennec and Arezzo in Tuscany. This reflects the way that these Breton cults had small concentrated areas of dedications, which seems to have been the case until the early tenth century and the Viking invasion of the area.⁵² The saints' cults in south Wales may well have started out in a similar way, but they had clearly begun to expand long before the tenth century, as shown above.

The approach of Lindisfarne to creating relationships with other saints' cults is completely different to that of Ireland or Wales. The *Life of St Cuthbert* does include other saints and prominent ecclesiastical figures, but they are all part of the Lindisfarne federation. St Aidan is mentioned early in the *Life of St Cuthbert*, to reinforce the idea of the holy origins of Lindisfarne.⁵³ Bishop Eata takes an active role in inviting St Cuthbert to Lindisfarne.⁵⁴ In Bede's revision of the *Life of St Cuthbert* he adds in a section about St Cuthbert's successors on Farne and how the cow hide used by one of them to protect from wind was divided up to become small relics.⁵⁵ The hagiography is obviously trying to build up not just the cult of St

⁴⁹ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §§I.7-21, I.21-36.

⁵⁰ Brett, 'Soldiers, Saints, and States?', p. 34; L. Olsen, 'Introduction: 'Getting Somewhere' with the First Life of St Samson of Dol' in L. Olsen (ed.), *St Samson of Dol and the earliest history of Brittany, Cornwall and Wales* (Woodbridge, 2017), p. 7.

⁵¹ J.M. Smith, 'Oral and Written: Saints, Miracles and Relics in Brittany, c. 850-1250', *Speculum* 65.2 (1990), p. 314.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 320, 337.

⁵³ Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §1.5.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, §3.1.

⁵⁵ Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §46.

Cuthbert but the cult of Lindisfarne itself by giving the monastery a pantheon of saints and important ecclesiastical figures. In Bede's version of the *Life of St Cuthbert* there is a new emphasis placed on St Cuthbert's time at Melrose and the role of Abbot Boisil. Boisil takes an active role welcoming St Cuthbert to Melrose and it is implied that he becomes a mentor for the saint.⁵⁶ Thacker suggests this was to settle disputes about the saint's time at the site.⁵⁷ There are parallels between this and the way that the *Life of St Teilo* includes references to his nephew St Tyfei to confirm their right to Lamphey. Bede also adds an implied condemnation of St Wilfrid. After the death of St Cuthbert there are ten years of turbulence described in the hagiography.⁵⁸ These coincide with the years that Lindisfarne was ruled by Wilfrid and the addition of this section serves as a subtle way for Bede to discredit Wilfrid.⁵⁹ Given that at the time that Bede was composing his *Life of St Cuthbert*, York was beginning to promote the cult of St Wilfrid, this served to further consolidate the status of Lindisfarne and promote St Cuthbert ahead of St Wilfrid. This is similar to the way Liferis tried to show the superiority of St Cadog over St David in the *Life of St Cadog* or the way that Llandaf attempted to demonstrate its superiority over Llanilltud Fawr in the *Book of Llandaf Life of St Dyfrig*, though in a slightly more subtle manner.

Landscape

The presence of a saint's cult in the landscape can reflect important aspects of how it spread and developed. The saints' cults of south Wales in the early medieval period showed highly developed local pilgrim landscapes and extensive dedications over wide areas. The way that saints' cults were organised in Ireland, Scotland, Brittany and England in some ways reflect the pattern found in Wales, but they also differ significantly in other aspects. In many ways the unique landscapes of each of these areas has shaped their saints' cults in different ways.

The principal foundation and the area around it are considered as the nucleus of a saint's cult. In a similar way that the Welsh hagiography promoted the local landscape of saints' cults, the hagiography of the Insular cults which have been examined emphasise aspects of the landscape around the saints' central foundations. Iona was the principal foundation of the cult

⁵⁶ Ibid., §§6, 8.

⁵⁷ A. Thacker, 'Shaping the Saint: Rewriting Tradition in the Early Lives of St Cuthbert', in R. Flechner & M. Ní Mhaonaigh (eds.), *The Introduction of Christianity into the Early Medieval Insular World: Converting the Isles I* (Turnhout, 2016), pp. 16-21.

⁵⁸ Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §40.

⁵⁹ A. Thacker, 'Shaping the Saint', p. 24.

of St Columba. The finding and consecration of a saint's principal foundation is a common motif in hagiography, but this is notably absent in the *Life of St Columba*. Adomnán does however include the foundation of Durrow in the hagiography.⁶⁰ This may suggest that there was some question over whether St Columba himself had founded Durrow, while Iona was firmly tied to him. Even though the actual foundation of Iona is not included in the hagiography the site does appear central to the narrative. Unless Adomnán specifically states that he is elsewhere, the reader is left to assume that episodes including the saint mainly occur on Iona. There are a number of places that were part of the topography of Iona that were included in the hagiography. A hut on the island that St Columba used as a scriptorium is mentioned in relation to a prophecy; a field that grew crops miraculously quickly, named Delcros; a certain hill that St Columba liked to sit on; a barn that the saint blessed; and a site where the saint rested half way between the barn and the monastery where a cross was later erected.⁶¹ This all creates the impression of a developed pilgrim landscape at Iona by the seventh century. This inclusion of places around Iona is very similar to how Lifris portrays the landscape around Llancarfan in the *Life of St Cadog*, reflecting a similar approach to creating a developed local cult landscape. The inclusion of miracle stories at Durrow and Derry suggests that Adomnán was also trying to promote the other major foundations of the cult of St Columba in Ireland.⁶² This shows an active drive to promote the local landscape around Iona and also the other foundations of the cult in Ireland.

The Life of St Patrick can be seen as a series of topographical tales which promote the cult of St Patrick across the landscape of Ireland. It includes an extensive episode describing how St Patrick was granted the land for Armagh. He is first granted the land which Muirchú informs the reader became the burial ground of martyrs beside Armagh. He then comes into conflict with a local ruler who eventually realises the power of the saint and freely grants him the land of Armagh. The site is marked out by a doe and a fawn.⁶³ The hagiography is clearly emphasising the holy nature of the founding of Armagh by St Patrick. There are several parallels between this episode and those found in the Welsh hagiography. The importance of the site is seen in the appearance of the fawn and the doe, similar to the way many of the Welsh sites were marked by the appearance of a white sow. A similar act appears in *the Life of St Patrick* to mark out where his body should be buried: in this instance an angel orders

⁶⁰ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §I.3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, §§II.3, II.4, III.24.

⁶² *Ibid.*, §§I.3, II.2.

⁶³ Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, §I.24.

that two cows should be released and where they came to rest would mark the place.⁶⁴ The hagiography in both Ireland and Wales deliberately places an emphasis on the way the importance of these sites was ordained by holy markers. Despite the cult of St Patrick being arguably the earliest cult in Ireland, even the monks at Armagh felt the need to highlight the important parts of the local landscape. This suggests that promoting a pilgrim landscape was just as important for the saints' cults of Ireland as it was in south Wales.

The importance of the local landscape to a saint's cult seems to have taken longer to develop in Brittany than in Wales. The *Life of St Samson* does not include any tales about the area of Dol, the principal foundation of the cult. The author seems to be aware of the importance of highlighting the saint in the landscape, as there are many examples of this in the time the saint spends in Britain. The composer places special emphasis on all the different foundations and sites that St Samson visits in Wales, Ireland and Cornwall, but this emphasis almost disappears once the saint arrives in Brittany.⁶⁵ The only site other than Dol that is mentioned once he is in Brittany is a site on the Seine, Pental, where St Samson defeats a serpent.⁶⁶ This may be because the Breton foundations were largely isolated communities, and their saints were only venerated on a very local level, so there was little incentive to create the same kind of topological tales to promote pilgrimage.⁶⁷ These types of episodes do begin to appear in the later Breton hagiography. The late ninth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian* includes episodes about several local healing springs that appeared when called by the saint.⁶⁸ Wrmonoc, the composer of the *Life of St Paul Aurélian*, even makes a note that the healing springs were still being used, suggesting active pilgrimage to these sites in the late ninth century. The isolated nature of the Breton foundations seems to have meant that it took longer for them to establish developed local pilgrim landscapes than in Wales, but from at least the late ninth century saints' cults were closely tied to the landscape around their principal foundations.⁶⁹

In contrast, both *Lives of St Cuthbert* seem to promote the cult only at Lindisfarne itself and the hermitage at Farne. St Cuthbert spent much of his life as a hermit, but while he was

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, §II.11.

⁶⁵ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, the school of St Iltud §I.7, monastery of St Piro §I.20, monastery in Ireland §I.38, oratory at site of cave retreat §I.41, churches consecrated for his mother §I.45, Doco monastery in Cornwall §I.46, new monastery in Cornwall §I.50.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, §I.58.

⁶⁷ Smith, 'Oral and Written', pp. 314, 320, 337.

⁶⁸ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §§ 14, 15.

⁶⁹ Smith, 'Oral and Written', p. 337.

bishop he is described as ministering to the local people. There are several episodes that describe miracles that he performed while out ministering, but none of them include place names to identify where they occurred.⁷⁰ Similar episodes in the Welsh hagiography are usually included to highlight the saints' connections to certain places, but here they act only to demonstrate the holy power of St Cuthbert. The hagiography does portray a more centralised pilgrim landscape at Lindisfarne and at Farne. At Lindisfarne several relics are described in the hagiography to encourage pilgrimage to the site.⁷¹ Many aspects of St Cuthbert's hermitage on Farne are described as being miraculous. A large stone that formed part of the hermitage moved there from the other side of the island by a miracle. Similarly, the saint required a beam of wood for construction and one miraculously washed up on the shore for the purpose. Within the hermitage itself there was a fountain created when St Cuthbert prayed for water, since there was no source on the island.⁷² These items are described as still being part of the hermitage, suggesting that the hagiography was emphasising them to create a more developed site at Farne rather than a developed presence of St Cuthbert in the landscape. This is very different to the way that Welsh saints' cults appear in the landscape. The hagiography and the topography show that the Welsh saints were closely tied to the local area and that this was an important way in which the popularity of these cults were promoted. The main places that are named in the *Life of St Cuthbert* are Ripon and Melrose.⁷³ Melrose was the main daughter house of Lindisfarne, a connection the author is clearly keen to emphasise. The relationship between Ripon and Lindisfarne was slightly more complicated in this period. Ripon had been a daughter house of Lindisfarne until it was granted to Wilfrid in the second half of the seventh century.⁷⁴ Associating the foundation with St Cuthbert in the hagiography may have been an attempt by the abbot of Lindisfarne to reclaim it. The cult of St Cuthbert suggests that the development of the principal monastery of Lindisfarne was more important than any wider promotion of the cult. There was also an emphasis placed on the main daughter houses of Lindisfarne, reflecting a consolidation of the federation of Lindisfarne. This may reflect the development of the great English minsters, from this concentration of the power of saints' cults into the principal foundations. The differences are clear: the success of a Welsh saints' cult is largely seen in

⁷⁰ Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§2.5-7, 4.4-7.

⁷¹ See below for further details about the relics of the cult of St Cuthbert.

⁷² Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§3.2, 3.3, 3.4.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, §§2.2, 2.3, 3.2.

⁷⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 319.

the growth of the cult in the landscape; in England it is seen in the growth of the individual foundations.

Island retreats were a common feature of the Welsh ecclesiastical landscape. They are seen at Ramsey, Bardsey, Barry and Caldey Island for the saints of south Wales. The liminal nature of island locations meant that they were popular as places for hermitages. Iona is an obvious island monastery, though it was not as isolated a location as it might seem, as it was on several major sea routes.⁷⁵ This is suggested in the *Life of St Columba* where many people are mentioned visiting Iona. However, it was still a liminal site by its nature as an island. In the hagiography when St Columba dies a storm prevents anyone from visiting the island for three days.⁷⁶ There are also other examples of prominent island monasteries and hermitages around the coast of Ireland. Skellig Michael is an island monastery and hermitage in Co. Kerry, with a monastery on one side dedicated to St Michael and a hermitage on the south peak. Likewise, Inishmurray is a small island monastery in Co. Sligo. Inishmurray was the principal foundation of the cult of St Molaise: an extensive complex, with two churches, hermit cells, three cemeteries and a series of monuments ringing the island.⁷⁷ The communities at these sites and Iona represent high status foundations located on islands with a permanent presence throughout the early medieval period. The *Life of St Samson* suggests that the monastery of St Peiro on Caldey Island was occupied all the time, as at the island monasteries in Ireland and Western Scotland. However, it was clearly not a prominent site and had disappeared by the end of the period. The episodes that mention islands in the Welsh hagiography suggest that the saints used them as temporary retreats. This suggests a very different culture surrounding island monasteries in Ireland and Western Scotland than in Wales.

The Breton hagiography does not suggest any real focus on island monasteries. There are some examples of small island monasteries like St Malo's, across from the city of Alet, or Île de Saint-Cado, a foundation on a river island. St Malo's became the seat of the bishop of Alet from the late ninth century, suggesting there were some prominent island monasteries in Brittany during the early medieval period.⁷⁸ The fact that there are few examples of island retreats in Brittany may be due to the fact that those who went to Brittany from Britain and

⁷⁵ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 298.

⁷⁶ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §III.24.

⁷⁷ T. Ó Carragáin, 'The Saint and the Sacred Centre: The Early Medieval Pilgrim Landscape of Inishmurray' in N. Edwards (ed.), *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches* (London, 2009), pp. 207-9.

⁷⁸ Smith, 'Oral and Written', p. 332.

Ireland were practising *peregrinatio* so were already living in isolation from their homes. The *Life of St Samson* describes his constant search for greater isolation while in Wales, but this search is complete when he then leaves to go to Brittany. The Breton ecclesiastics then did not need to search out liminal spaces like islands. Again, this suggests a very different mentality in Brittany than in Wales.

The cult of St Cuthbert has a very clear island focus. Lindisfarne itself is an island, and nearby Farne where St Cuthbert had his hermitage was a more isolated adjacent island site. In the *Life of St Cuthbert* he lives on Farne before being made bishop at Lindisfarne, and he goes back to Farne when he gives up being bishop.⁷⁹ The hagiography seems to suggest that St Cuthbert's desire to live as a hermit is part of what made him holy. The closest parallel to this in the Welsh material is the way that St Illtud left his monastery to live in caves on a river.⁸⁰ In these episodes St Illtud was trying to find somewhere isolated to be closer to God, just as St Cuthbert did on Farne. However, the main difference is that St Illtud returned to Llanilltud Fawr each time, while St Cuthbert remained on Farne until his death. This again reflects the way that the saints of the major Welsh saints' cults only sought isolation temporarily, unlike St Cuthbert who desired to live a hermit's life permanently.

Inscribed stones and stone monuments are a clear part of the ecclesiastical landscape in Wales. They are important indicators of status and patronage in the early medieval period. These stones are also found in other parts of the Insular world. They are very prominent in Ireland and Western Scotland for much of the period. They first started appearing in Ireland in the seventh century.⁸¹ This is later than inscribed stones started appearing in Wales, but roughly contemporary with the appearance of them at ecclesiastical sites. From the eighth century a more elaborate style of free-standing crosses, high crosses, started appearing in Ireland and Western Scotland. At Iona there are several examples of this type of cross, like St Martin's Cross mentioned above. There are a total of 108 stone monuments from across the period found at Iona. The earliest date to the eighth century and there were cross slabs produced there right up to the eleventh century.⁸² A similar picture is seen at the major ecclesiastical institutions in Ireland. Clonmacnoise, for example, had 700 cross slabs from between the eighth and twelfth centuries. A stone from the tenth century at the site was

⁷⁹ Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§3.2, 4.1, 4.11.

⁸⁰ *Vita Sancti Illtuti*, §§18, 21.

⁸¹ M. Carver, *Formative Britain: An Archaeology of Britain, Fifth to Eleventh Century AD* (London, 2019), p. 562.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 512-13, 563.

erected for a king of the Uí Neill.⁸³ This bears similarities to the way that some of the inscribed stones in Wales, as at Llanilltud Fawr, were erected for local rulers. However, in Wales this seems to have occurred from the eighth century, which is much earlier in the period. Although there are similarities in the way that stone monuments were erected at ecclesiastical sites in Ireland, Western Scotland and Wales, the differences of scale are very clear: only a handful of stones appear at even major sites in south Wales, but hundreds appear at the principal foundations in Ireland and Western Scotland.⁸⁴ The high crosses of these areas were also much more elaborate than most of the examples found in Wales.

Inscribed stones and stone monuments are also evident in England during the early medieval period. They were first produced in Northumbria, presumably because of the Irish influences in the area. From the late seventh century they began to be erected around churches and monastic complexes within Northumbria. The practice spread out from the central areas of Northumbria in the mid-eighth century and elaborate free standing crosses, known as victory crosses, began to be erected.⁸⁵ At Lindisfarne there are several elaborate grave markers from the seventh to eighth-centuries.⁸⁶ York Minster houses elaborate grave slabs that combine Anglican crosses and intricate Viking interlace.⁸⁷ The production of stone monuments in England began later than that in Wales, but it quickly developed to match and surpass the quality of those found in Wales. The elaborate designs found on the victory crosses and even grave markers from the ninth century are much more intricate than contemporary stones from any of the ecclesiastical sites in south Wales.

Relics

The relics of a saint were very important in the medieval world. Relics helped to show the sanctity of a saint and were used to promote the status of the cult of that saint. Relics took on many forms in different places, and could be anything that was related to the saint. In many parts of Europe in the Middle Ages corporeal relics were the most important relics of a saint.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 563, 566.

⁸⁴ N. Edwards, 'Early Medieval sculpture in the south-west Wales: the Irish Sea connection', in R. Moss (ed.), *Making and Meaning in Insular Art* (Dublin, 2007), pp. 188-9; N. Edwards, *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales Vol II* (Cardiff, 2007), p. 57

⁸⁵ Carver, *Formative Britain*, p. 522.

⁸⁶ R. Cramp, 'The Artistic Influence of Lindisfarne within Northumbria' in G. Bonner, D Rollason & C. Stancliffe (eds.), *St Cuthbert, his cult and his community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 224-6.

⁸⁷ Carver, *Formative Britain*, p. 554.

However, in the Insular world secondary relics appear to have been the most prominent form of relic.

The cult of bodily relics was not evident in Wales in the early medieval period, and the drive for foundations to have the bodies of their saints only began in the late eleventh century, presumably in response to Norman influence. Stories were introduced into the Welsh hagiography to explain the absence of bodies or to explain why multiple churches claimed the body of a saint, as in the case of the *Life of St Teilo*. The overall picture presented was that the major saints' cults of early medieval south Wales did not know where the actual graves of their saints were. The same cannot be said of the saints of Ireland. The attitude in Ireland to the bodies of Irish saints was different from that of south Wales, but also differed from that of the Continental church. The hagiography from Ireland suggests that there was a vested interest in the possession of a saint's body, but not to the level of venerating the body and promoting tomb cults or reliquaries of the bones of a saint. The place that the body of the saint was buried became home of the saint on earth which gave status to the foundation that housed the body.⁸⁸ The burial of St Columba is included in the *Life of St Columba* to show that his body was at Iona, and Adomnán notes that his resting place was still visited by angels, highlighting the presence of the saint at the site.⁸⁹ The abbot of Iona had some of the bones of St Aidan translated and brought to Iona in 664.⁹⁰ This shows the desire of the abbot of Iona to increase the status of the foundation by making it the site of the bodies of two of its great saints. St Brigit is given an illustrious burial at Kildare in Cogitosus's *Life of St Brigit*, where she and her brother Archbishop Conlaed are buried in decorated sarcophagi on each side of the altar.⁹¹ However, while these examples show the importance for Iona and Kildare to emphasise their possession of the bodies of their saints, the absence of any miracles then associated with those bodies in the hagiography shows that they were not attempting to promote the bodies of the saints as holy relics. The description of the burial of St Patrick, where a cubit of earth is placed over the body to prevent bodily relics being taken, suggests that in the period that Muirchú composed his *Life of St Patrick* there was even an active movement against the removal of bodily relics from the grave.⁹² The earliest known shrines

⁸⁸ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 108.

⁸⁹ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §III.23.

⁹⁰ N. Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology' in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West* (Oxford, 2002), p. 251.

⁹¹ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 238; Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 108.

⁹² Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, §II.12.

for corporeal remains in Ireland date to the twelfth century, suggesting that it was not until this period that the cult of bodily relics began to be promoted.⁹³ This reflects the same period that corporeal relics began to gain importance in Wales. The resulting relics in Ireland, however, may have had more authenticity than those in Wales, which were mostly manufactured, as the different foundations in Ireland actually knew where their saints were buried.

There does not appear to be evidence of early interest in corporeal relics in Brittany. There are no examples of tomb cults or the promotion of relics in the hagiography. As in Ireland and Western Scotland, the saints' cults in Brittany did make a note of the places that their saints were buried. The *Life of St Samson* describes a house where the saint was buried at Dol.⁹⁴ The translation of St Winwaloe at Landévennec from a smaller church to the larger monastic church suggests that there was some emphasis placed on the location that a saint was buried.⁹⁵ However, it is important to note that there were no examples of post-mortem miracles associated with these bodies.⁹⁶ The period in which the religious communities of Brittany fled to France during the Viking invasions further highlights their care for the bodies of their saints. When the monks fled, they often took the bodies of their saints with them. The relics of St Corentin, for example, were taken from Quimper to Paris in the early tenth century.⁹⁷ When these religious communities returned to their foundations later in the tenth century, some did not bring their patron's bodies back with them, or some only had parts. The relics of St Corentin were distributed to several French foundations. Saint-Magloire de Paris, Montreuil-sur-Mer and Marmoutiers all claimed large parts of the saint's body, leaving only part of an arm for the monks to return with to Quimper.⁹⁸ The cult of St Corentin continued to flourish at Quimper, despite the absence of the relics. Similarly, the body of St Paul Aurélian was removed from Saint-Pol-de-Léon and taken to Fleury c. 958-60. Despite the absence of the body of the saint, the cult at Saint-Pol-de-Léon continued to thrive, as shown in the thirteenth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian*.⁹⁹ Breton foundations with direct links with nearby French institutions did see some influence of the cult of bodily relics. The cult of St Malo at Alet had a close relationship with Tours, even portraying the saint as having been

⁹³ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 252.

⁹⁴ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §II.15.

⁹⁵ Smith, 'Oral and Written', p. 320.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 316, 320, 325, 335.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 324-6.

consecrated as bishop at the Basilica of St Martin at Tours in the ninth-century *Life of St Malo*. The hagiography also highlights the way that the cult of the saint was based around the translated relics of St Malo in much the same way as the cult of St Martin.¹⁰⁰ This suggests that the majority of Breton saints' cults had very little interest in corporeal relics. Their interest in the burial sites and protection of the bodies is similar to that in Ireland, but there is no evidence that they revered these bodies as relics except in certain sites which had close French connections.

In comparison, there was a keen interest in corporeal relics in England from quite early in the period. Towards the end of the seventh century there is a clear move towards the promotion of this kind of relic.¹⁰¹ The importance of the bodily relics of St Cuthbert can be clearly seen in both the *Lives of St Cuthbert*. There is first an emphasis placed on the way the body is brought to Lindisfarne to be buried by permission of St Cuthbert himself.¹⁰² There is then extra emphasis placed on the miraculous nature of his body in the description of how his body was taken out of its sepulchre eleven years later and found to be uncorrupted.¹⁰³ This theme is then expanded on with the description of the miracles that were caused by his body.¹⁰⁴ This was all a concerted effort on the part of Lindisfarne to promote the corporeal relics of St Cuthbert. This kind of promotion was relatively new in England at the time that the first *Life of St Cuthbert* was composed. The emphasis on the incorrupt nature of the body was one of only a few examples that appeared in the late seventh century in England. Three years before St Cuthbert's body was translated, the body of an abbess of Ely was found to be incorrupt. It is likely that this was the inspiration for the situation at Lindisfarne. The abbess of Ely who ordered the body to be disinterred was from Francia and her sister had been found in the same manner at a foundation in Faremoutiers.¹⁰⁵ The Continental influence of the cult of bodily relics on England can easily be seen here. The second *Life of St Cuthbert* by Bede expands on the miracles described in the first *Life*, placing special emphasis on the prominent position of the sepulchre at Lindisfarne by the altar, showing an increased desire in the early eighth century to promote bodily relics. This reflects the situation on the Continent rather than in the rest of Britain or any other part of the Insular world.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 333.

¹⁰¹ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 108.

¹⁰² Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §4.13.

¹⁰³ Ibid., §4.14.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., §§4.15-4.16.

¹⁰⁵ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 106.

Secondary relics were the main kind found in Wales through most of the early medieval period. As discussed, bells, books and altars were the main relics found in Wales, though there were examples of a staff and a tunic in the *Life of St David*. Staffs, croziers or bachals seem to have a much more prominent position in Ireland and Western Scotland. A staff appears in connection with a miracle in the *Life of St Columba*, immediately highlighting the miraculous nature of it. St Columba is travelling and realises that he has left his staff on Iona. He prays and the staff appears in the grass near him.¹⁰⁶ St Patrick is often associated with his crozier. The staff appears in Muirchú's *Life of St Patrick* briefly when the saint is described in a prophecy as appearing with his staff.¹⁰⁷ This staff was so iconic it was supposedly used by the archbishops of Armagh right up to the Reformation.¹⁰⁸ Staffs in general were popular across Ireland. There are at least fifty surviving examples of them that survive as relics.¹⁰⁹ Bells were common relics in Ireland as well, though they seem to have played less of a prominent role in the hagiography. A bell does appear in the *Life of St Columba*, but not in a way that suggests that it was a special relic of Iona, just the bell that called the monks to prayer.¹¹⁰ This does not reflect the status given to holy bells seen archaeologically. Around seventy-five bells are known of from Ireland, many of them with shrines to house them. The bells themselves are difficult to date, but the bell shrines first date to the period between the late eighth and ninth centuries, growing in popularity in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries.¹¹¹

The great gospel books of Ireland, from the *Book of Kells* to the *Book of Deer* are well known and numerous. The community of St Columba owned the *Book of Durrow*, a book they claimed had been written by St Columba himself.¹¹² In the *Life of St Columba* books appear twice. The first example was a book that was dropped in water and was ruined except for a single page that had been written by the saint.¹¹³ On another occasion brethren of Iona read aloud some books written in the hand of the saint and caused it to rain, preventing drought.¹¹⁴ These examples show why Durrow would claim that their gospel book was written by St Columba, if books in his handwriting were blessed with miraculous powers. The significance

¹⁰⁶ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §II.14.

¹⁰⁷ Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, §I.10.

¹⁰⁸ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 244.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

¹¹⁰ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §III.23.

¹¹¹ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', pp. 255-6.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 259.

¹¹³ Adomnán, *Vita Sancti Columbae*, §II.8.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, §II.44.

of gospel books as relics can be seen from the ninth century in Ireland with the emergence of book shrines.¹¹⁵ There appears to have been some similarities in the ways that gospel books were used in Ireland to record grants. In the same way that the *Lichfield Gospels* recorded a number of grants the *Book of Kells* and the *Book of Deer* contain addenda that record land grants.¹¹⁶ There is, however, a significance in the periods that this was occurring. The marginalia in the *Lichfield Gospels* appear from the eighth century while the Irish addenda date to the twelfth century. There are examples of other possessions of the saints being kept as relics in Ireland. St Ciarán was associated with the hide of a cow and St Moninna was associated with a spade and hoe.¹¹⁷ This suggests that relics in Ireland were not confined to specific types of objects, like bells or staffs, but included possessions specific to individual saints.

There are few surviving secondary relics in Brittany. There is some suggestion that relics gained more importance as the period progressed. There are no relics mentioned in the *Life of St Samson*. However, in the ninth-century *Life of St Paul Aurélian* two relics are mentioned in relation to the saint: a bell named *Hirlas* and a gospel book.¹¹⁸ There are examples of six surviving bells in Brittany. This suggests that bells at least were still kept as relics in the area. There is also a mention of St Samson having had a crozier that was stolen but returned when the robber was struck by terror and fell through some ice.¹¹⁹ The limited promotion of relics among Breton cults may be due to the fact that many of them were quite isolated and therefore quite local in character, so their foundations may not have had a reason to promote their relics in the same way as in Wales. There is also some suggestion that in Brittany there was not the same relationship between miracles caused by a saint after their death and actual objects. A miracle recorded in the eleventh century shows that healing in the parish of Landévennec was attributed to St Winwaloe without any relics needing to be present, and miracles after the death of St Corentin at Quimper shows the saint appearing or speaking directly to those he healed and not working through relics either.¹²⁰ The lack of evidence for the promotion of corporeal or secondary relics suggests that Breton saints' cults had a very different attitude towards relics than those in Wales or Ireland.

¹¹⁵ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 260.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

¹¹⁸ *Vita Sancti Pauli Aureliani*, §17; Smith, 'Oral and Written', p. 323.

¹¹⁹ *Vita I Sancti Samsonis*, §II.10.

¹²⁰ Smith, 'Oral and Written', pp. 321, 328.

In the same way that the *Life of St Cuthbert* heavily promoted the corporeal relics of the saint, it also highlights the secondary relics of the cult of St Cuthbert. The special description of the robes and shoes he was buried in acts as a signal to the reader that these were special objects for the cults, even before the miracles related to them are described.¹²¹ The hagiography describes two main secondary relics at Lindisfarne. The water from a pit that the body of St Cuthbert's body was washed in banished a demon from a young boy and the shoes of the saint healed a paralytic boy.¹²² The second *Life of St Cuthbert* by Bede shows the way that the cult of relics at Lindisfarne had become more important in the period between the composition of the two Lives. Bede greatly expands on the sections describing relics of the saint, making sure to promote them for Lindisfarne. The sarcophagus itself is given significance by being gifted to St Cuthbert by Abbot Cudda. Similarly, the linen that the saint was wrapped in is described as being another gift, this time from Abbess Verca which was too fine to wear in life.¹²³ The cloth features prominently in the episode describing how the saint's body and the cloth in which he was buried were found uncorrupted when the body was translated.¹²⁴ This was probably because the cloth was kept at Lindisfarne and venerated as a relic.¹²⁵ It was not directly promoted in the first Life, so Bede makes sure that it is clearly included in the catalogue of relics associated with St Cuthbert. He also emphasises that the pit where the saint's body was washed was still in the church at Lindisfarne, suggesting that he was trying to promote it as a holy place within Lindisfarne, potentially encouraging pilgrimage to the foundation by creating a complex sacred landscape through the relics.¹²⁶ The added episode describing the cow hide used at Farne by a successor of St Cuthbert and the miracle it caused further shows Bede's desire to promote the relics owned by Lindisfarne.¹²⁷ This cow hide and other parts of the hermitage on Farne were distributed as relics, in a similar way that parts of the supposed true cross were often sold as relics across Europe.¹²⁸ Bede's promotion of these relics suggests that for Lindisfarne, the secondary relics were just as important as the corporeal relics for promoting the cult of St Cuthbert.

¹²¹ Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§4.14, 4.17; Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 105.

¹²² Anon., *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §§4.15, 4.17.

¹²³ Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §37.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, §42.

¹²⁵ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', p. 105.

¹²⁶ Bede, *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, §41.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, §46.

¹²⁸ Thacker, 'Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult of St Cuthbert', pp. 106, 109.

The secondary relics associated with St Cuthbert are mainly items of clothing. The types of relics which were popular in Wales, Ireland and Brittany, like bells and staffs, are not found in the case of the cult of St Cuthbert. There are two bells found in England, but they are both from Hereford, an area which often had Welsh influence during the early medieval period, as seen already when Bishop Herewald created new foundations in Ergyng in the second half of the eleventh century.¹²⁹ The only relic of an Insular character that was prominent in England during the early medieval period was the book. Gospel books appear to have held as much of an important position within English ecclesiastical institutions as in the other insular countries. The *Lindisfarne Gospels* are a prime example of an illuminated gospel book promoted by the principal foundation of a saints' cult. They reflect the tradition of important gospel books being held by foundations, as with the *Book of Kells* in Ireland and the *Lichfield Gospels* at Llandeilo Fawr. The *Lichfield Gospels* are another example of a prestigious gospel book in England. Although originally at Llandeilo Fawr in Wales, the gospels were taken to Lichfield cathedral at some point in the tenth century. These gospel books appear to be the only similar relics found in both Wales and England, showing that English saints' cults prioritised very different objects as relics than in Wales, and indeed in Ireland and Brittany.

Conclusion

There are clear similarities between the saints' cults and ecclesiastical development of south Wales and Ireland, Scotland, England and Brittany during the early medieval period. However, there are also obvious differences. The greatest similarities with south Wales are seen with Ireland and Western Scotland. Evident in both are the relationships between saints' cults and local rulers and the importance of privileges and grants. The different saints' cults had close links at the beginning of the period in the sixth and seventh centuries, relationships which subsequently deteriorated and became rivalries over the course of the following centuries. The development of the local pilgrim landscape around principal foundations is seen in both areas. Island retreats were popular in all three cultures. Stone monuments were present at major ecclesiastical sites across the period. There was a similar approach to the cult of relics in both areas, with a rejection of the cult of bodily relics until the end of the period in the twelfth century, and instead an emphasis on secondary relics. However, these similarities disguise great differences of scale between Wales, Ireland and Western Scotland. As

¹²⁹ Edwards, 'Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology', p. 255.

described above, the relationships between saints' cults and rulers in Ireland were much closer, with the major foundations run by branches of royal lineages. These foundations were much more powerful than their Welsh counterparts, with the abbots of foundations like Iona controlling vast ecclesiastical federations and wielding power akin to the Irish kings. The rivalries between different saints' cults in Ireland descended into open warfare between the foundations, an act that was never recorded in Wales. Island retreats became major foundations in Ireland and Western Scotland, while in south Wales they remained minor foundations and occasional retreats. The stone monuments that were common to both areas were evident in vastly greater numbers in Ireland and Western Scotland than they were in Wales to such an extent that the two are barely comparable. The secondary relics most popular in Ireland were staffs while in Wales the focus was on bells instead. The saints' cults of Ireland and Western Scotland followed a similar pattern to Wales, but ultimately they existed on a much higher scale than any of the Welsh saints' cults.

There are fewer similarities between the Breton saints' cults and those of south Wales, despite many of their patron saints originating in Wales. The isolated nature of Breton saints' cults for much of the period meant that there were few relationships developed between them and local rulers or between different saints' cults. This local nature did result in the development of local pilgrim landscapes that reflected those found in south Wales, but unlike in Wales they remained local in nature rather than developing a series of daughter houses. There is little evidence of island retreats, either as major monastic sites or as hermitages. The main similarities are seen through their approach to relics: their limited focus on corporeal relics and the promotion of secondary relics. There was obviously a shared culture between south Wales and Brittany, but the manner in which saints' cults developed in each place was clearly quite different.

More similarities in the development of saints' cults can be seen between south Wales and England than with Brittany. In England the major saints had no royal connections, but there were many minor saints' cults dedicated to members of ruling Anglo-Saxon families. This led to relationships between many minor cults and local lords. The major cults had links to rulers from their conception. This reflects the relationships between the Welsh saints' cults and the different local rulers across the area. The cult of St Cuthbert also promoted relationships with other saints and ecclesiastical foundations. The hagiography emphasised aspects of the local landscape to promote a local pilgrim landscape. Island retreats were an important part of the ecclesiastical landscape. Stone monuments were erected at ecclesiastical sites in the same

way as in Wales. However, as with Ireland these similarities are only partial, and there are more differences than shared parallels. The relationships between the cult of St Cuthbert and the Northumbrian rulers were very different in character to the relationships with rulers seen in south Wales. While the Welsh saints' cults based their relationships on fear of the saints, the English maintained actual friendships with rulers: the Welsh Lives are much later and use mythical figures as rulers, but the authors make the saints gain their power through making the rulers fear them rather than creating a relationship of mutual respect as is portrayed in the relationship between St Cuthbert and King Ecgrith. The relationships with other saints and holy men and women emphasised in *the Life of St Cuthbert* were largely those within the Lindisfarne *familia* rather than from other linked saints' cults. Similarly, the hagiography only emphasises Lindisfarne itself and Farne, the sites at the centre of the cult, with no wider cult landscape. The promotion of the principal foundation was more important than any wider promotion of the saint's cult. The attitude in England to relics was greatly different than in south Wales. There was an active cult of corporeal relics evident throughout England, influenced by the Merovingian and Carolingian Church. There were secondary relics in England, but the bodily relics clearly played more of an active role in the promotion of a saint's cult.

The similarities between the cults of south Wales and those found in the rest of the Insular world from the sixth century to the twelfth century, though clear, are nevertheless quite basic in their nature. The differences are much more pronounced when examined closely. It is these differences that show that the saints' cults and the ecclesiastical landscape of south Wales in this period should not be considered just as a reflection of those found elsewhere in the Insular world, but are principally individual in nature to Wales. The way that the cults of SS. Cadog, Illtud, Teilo, Dyfrig and David developed suggest that the political, geographical and cultural influences in south Wales resulted in an ecclesiastical landscape that was particular to this area, despite similarities with other areas.

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