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Edited by John Williams [Ab Ithel]

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Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores, or The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, usually referred to as the 'Rolls Series', was an ambitious project first proposed to the British Treasury in 1857 by Sir John Romilly, the Master of the Rolls, and quickly approved for public funding. Its purpose was to publish historical source material covering the period from the arrival of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII, 'without mutilation or abridgement', starting with the 'most scarce and valuable' texts. A 'correct text' of each work would be established by collating 'the best manuscripts', and information was to be included in every case about the manuscripts used, the life and times of the author, and the work's 'historical credibility', but there would be no additional annotation. The first books were published in 1858, and by the time it was completed in 1896 the series contained 99 titles and 255 volumes. Although many of the works have since been re-edited by modern scholars, the enterprise as a whole stands as a testament to the Victorian revival of interest in the middle ages.

Brut y Tywysogion: The Chronicle of the Princes of Wales

This Welsh-language chronicle was published in 1860 for the Rolls Series. With facing-page translation into English, it was edited by John Williams, also known as Ab Ithel (1811–62), using the Red Book of Hergest as the base text and four other extant manuscripts, all of which are translations into Welsh of the missing Latin source. Williams extensively edited works of Welsh history and language, though his accuracy has been criticised. This text, possibly written by Caradoc of Llancarfan up to c.1150, then completed by monks or bards of the Strata Florida monastery, covers Welsh history from the seventh century to the thirteenth, with entries on natural disasters, changes in the church calendar and the deaths of royalty, including also romances, popular tales and poems. It is of interest to scholars studying the historiography of Wales and developments in the textual criticism of its important manuscripts.

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RERUM BRITANNICARUM MEDII ÆVI
SCRIPTORES,

OR

CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND

DURING

THE MIDDLE AGES.

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THE CHRONICLES AND MEMORIALS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
DURING THE MIDDLE AGES.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF HER MAJESTY'S TREASURY, UNDER THE
DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

ON the 26th of January 1857, the Master of the Rolls submitted to the Treasury a proposal for the publication of materials for the History of this Country from the Invasion of the Romans to the Reign of Henry VIII.

The Master of the Rolls suggested that these materials should be selected for publication under competent editors without reference to periodical or chronological arrangement, without mutilation or abridgment, preference being given, in the first instance, to such materials as were most scarce and valuable.

He proposed that each chronicle or historical document to be edited should be treated in the same way as if the editor were engaged on an *Editio Princeps*; and for this purpose the most correct text should be formed from an accurate collation of the best MSS.

To render the work more generally useful, the Master of the Rolls suggested that the editor should give an account of the MSS. employed by him, of their age and their peculiarities; that he should add to the work a brief account of the life and times of the author, and any remarks necessary to explain the chronology; but no other note or comment was to be allowed, except what might be necessary to establish the correctness of the text.

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The works to be published in octavo, separately, as they were finished; the whole responsibility of the task resting upon the editors, who were to be chosen by the Master of the Rolls with the sanction of the Treasury.

The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, after a careful consideration of the subject, expressed their opinion in a Treasury Minute, dated February 9, 1857, that the plan recommended by the Master of the Rolls "was well calculated for the accomplishment of this important national object, in an effectual and satisfactory manner, within a reasonable time, and provided proper attention be paid to economy, in making the detailed arrangements, without unnecessary expense."

They expressed their approbation of the proposal that each chronicle and historical document should be edited in such a manner as to represent with all possible correctness the text of each writer, derived from a collation of the best MSS., and that no notes should be added, except such as were illustrative of the various readings. They suggested, however, that the preface to each work should contain, in addition to the particulars proposed by the Master of the Rolls, a biographical account of the author, so far as authentic materials existed for that purpose, and an estimate of his historical credibility and value.

*Rolls House,
December 1857.*

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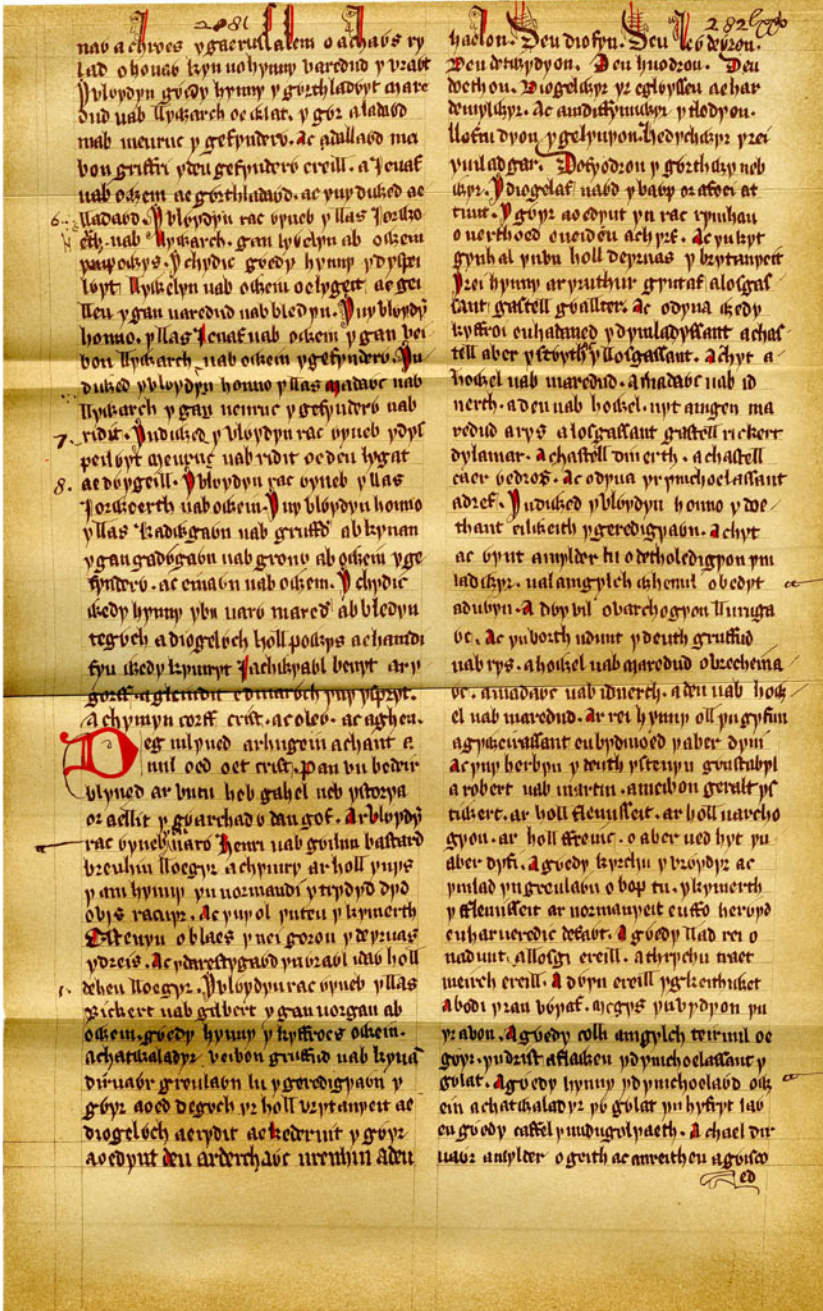
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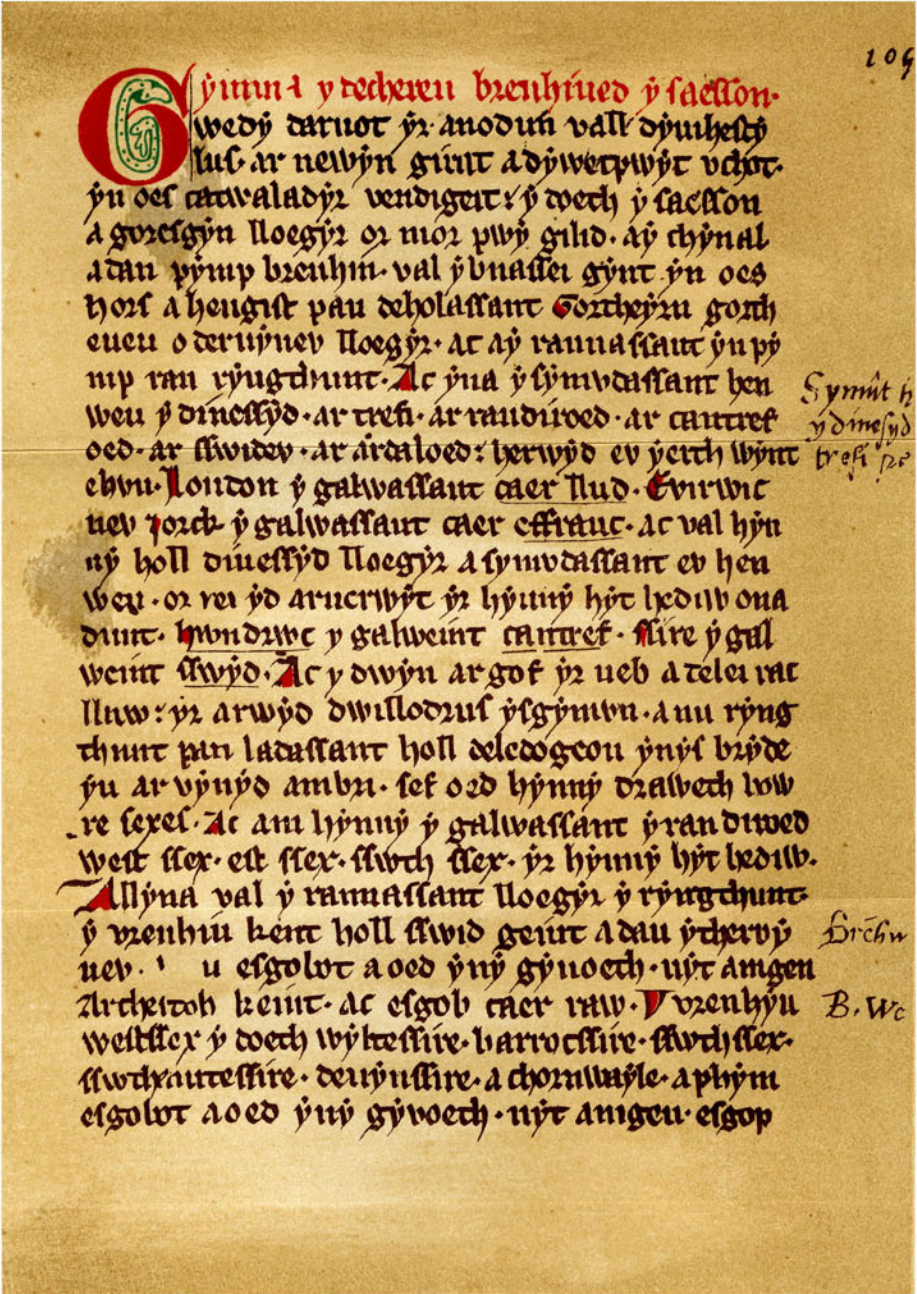
BRUT Y TYWYSOGION;
OR
THE CHRONICLE OF THE PRINCES OF
WALES.



Ms. RED BOOK, JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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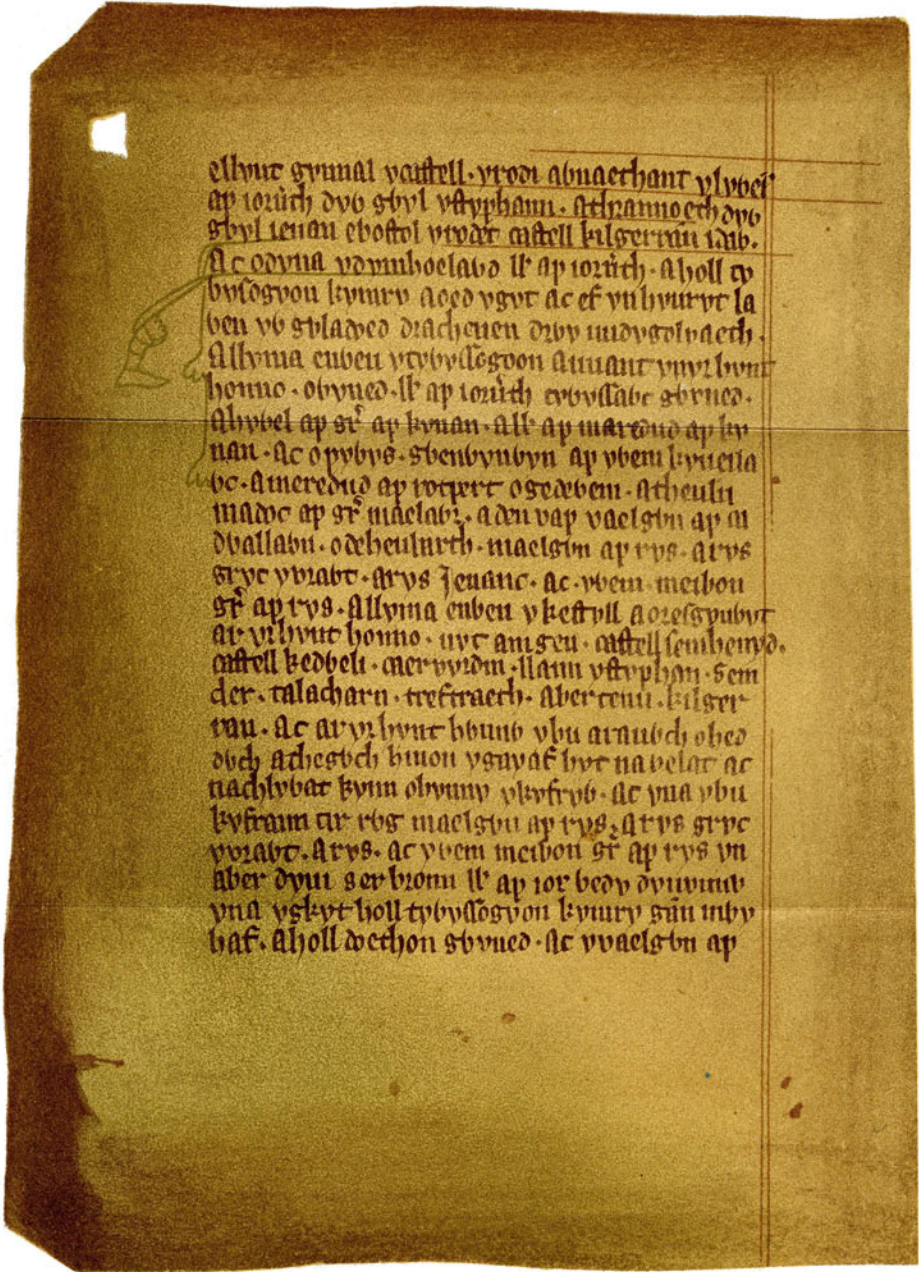
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OR,

THE CHRONICLE OF THE PRINCES.

EDITED

BY

THE REV. JOHN WILLIAMS AB ITHEL, M.A.,

RECTOR OF LLANYMOWDDWY, MERIONETHSHIRE.

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PREFACE.

THE voice of Tradition would not lead us to suppose that the ancient Britons paid any very particular attention to the study of chronology previous to the era of Prydain,¹ son of Aedd the Great, which is variously dated from the year 1780 to 480 before the nativity of Christ. Prior to that time the recollection of events depended upon the popularity of rude and inartificial songs, which were composed by the Gwyddoniaid, or Sages, and issued by them individually in their capacity of priests and local instructors. Whilst Prydain was engaged in the work of reforming the laws of the land, "he ordered diligent search to be made throughout the island for any persons who might possibly have retained in memory the primitive knowledge of the Cymry, so as to secure the traditional preservation of it."² Three such were

The primitive system of British chronology, and memorials.

¹ Prydain is a character much referred to in ancient British documents, especially in the Triads, wherein he is represented as having introduced among the several states social reforms of such importance as to cause his own name to be given to the island, which ever after has been called "Ynys Prydain," the Isle of Prydain. There is reason to believe that the Trojan fable has

been founded upon this name, the similarity which it bears to that of Brutus having led to the mistake.

² "The voice conventional of the Bards of the Island of Britain," extracted from Meurug of Glamorgan's Book, at Rhaglan Castle, by Llywelyn John of Llangewydd, in Glamorgan, who flourished about A.D. 1580.

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found, whose names were Plennydd, Alawn, and Gwron, and who belonged to the patriarchal order of the Gwyddoniaid. These having communicated what they knew, the whole, after due and proper notice, was recited publicly at the national sessions of the bards, which were now for the first time established; and the recitation was enjoined to be continued periodically on the occurrence of the bardic festivals, with the view of impressing the information on the public memory. And as time drew on, other events, according to the order in which they happened, were added to the series of memorials—being embodied either in vocal song or in triads.

Fitness of
the system
for the
times.

It cannot be denied that this system was admirably calculated, under the circumstances of the times, for effecting the desired object. Hence the “voice conventional” was called the chief of the three modes of perpetuating memorials—the other two being “vocal song,” and “letters,” as they existed of course in their primitive and isolated forms.¹

Under the
manage-
ment and
superinten-
dence of
the Bards.

All this was entrusted to the Bards, who at this time were, for the sake of greater convenience, divided into three distinct classes—Bards, Druids, and

¹ “The three memorials of the Bards of the race of the Cymry; the memorial of the voice of gorsedd, the memorial of vocal song, and the memorial of books; and the strongest of the three is the memorial of the voice of gorsedd, because it is preserved in the memory and hearing of country and nation, so that he who sees cause may doubt it.” (From the Book of Gutto the scholar, of Llanhari.) It may be proper to observe that most of the documents which relate to the Bardo-Druidic system hitherto exist

only in manuscript. At the Grand Eisteddvod, which was held at Llangollen, last year, a prize of a Gold Bardic Tiara and thirty pounds in money, was offered for the fullest illustration, from original sources, of the Theology, Discipline, and Usages of the Bardo-Druidic system of the Isle of Britain.” The prize was won by the editor of the present volume. The information thus brought together is such as will, when published, inevitably attract the attention of both British and Continental scholars.

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Ovates, each having its own peculiar duties and privileges. It is to be remarked that Cæsar bears witness to the care with which the Druids in his day cultivated the art of memory; nor did it escape his observation that letters were but sparingly used for the purpose, which he concludes was the case partly lest the pupils, by trusting too much to letters, should become less attentive to the faculty of memory,¹ a conclusion which seems to concur with the Bardic statement, that the use of letters was of inferior importance to the voice conventional.

The first event ascertained by Plennydd, Alawn, and Gwron, was the arrival of the Cymry in the island of Britain, which, according to the "Rhol Cov a Chyv-riv,"² or the roll of memorial and computation, took place eight hundred and forty-nine years before the time of Prydain, son of Aedd the Great. In other authorities the interval is somewhat differently and variously described: thus "Amseroedd Cov a Chyvrviv,"³ or the periods of memorial and computation, gives it at eight hundred and sixty-three years; "Cyvar-wyddyd,"⁴ or historical guide, nine hundred years; "Cov Cyvrviv—Cov Gwlad,"⁵ or the memorial of computation—the memorial of country, seven hundred years; and another manuscript, six hundred and fifty years.

¹ "Magnum ibi numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur; itaque annos nonnulli vicanos in disciplina permanent. Neque fas esse existimant, ea literis mandare, quum in reliquis fere rebus, publicis privatisque rationibus, Græcis utantur literis. Id mihi duabus de causis instituisse videntur; quod neque in vulgum disciplinam efferrî velint, neque eos, qui discant, literis confisos, minus memoriæ studere; quod fere pleris-

que accidit, ut præsidio literarum diligentiam in perdiscendo ac memoriæ remittant."—De Bell. Gall. Lib. vi. c. 14.

² Iolo MSS. p. 48. Copied by Meurug Davydd 1560–1600 from an old MS. in the Library of Rhaglan Castle.

³ Iolo MSS. p. 36.

⁴ Called also "Oes Lyvr," or Age Book. MS.

⁵ MS.

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Era of Prydain, or the time of memorial. But without laying much stress upon the statements of these authorities as to pre-historic memorials, or trying to reconcile apparent discrepancies, it is an undoubted fact that the Cymry in later ages were strongly impressed with the idea that the era of Prydain was the national era of chronology, which they termed "Amser Cov a Chyvrviv," or "Oedran "Cov a Chyvrviv," that is, the time of memorial and computation, or the age of memorial and computation.

Documents referring to the subject. Several fragments remain in manuscript which refer to this matter; and as they are in themselves highly curious, and also full of interest in respect of the subject of our inquiry, we will make no apology for making a few translated extracts:—

Conjecture and memory of country. "This is the mode in which the primitive teachers made a record of times:—From the arrival of the nation of the Cymry to this island it was the conjecture and memory of country and nation, for there was no privilege attached to the guidance of the memorial of computation prior to the time of Prydain, the son of Aedd."

Memorial of computation. "Before the time of Christ the Bards counted their time from the era in which Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, existed, that is, seven hundred years before Christ; and they would speak of the year of the memorial of computation, as if they said, Christ was born in the year of the memorial of computation 719, for it is true that that was the year. And there was no memorial of computation before the time of Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, when order and privilege were conferred upon Bards and what the Bards knew. And when the faith in Christ came, memorials were kept according to the year of Christ."

Memorial and computation. "The age of memorial and computation was counted from the time of Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, namely, four hundred and eighty years before

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“ the time when Christ came in the flesh. And when
 “ Bran the Blessed, son of Llyr, introduced the faith
 “ in Christ to the nation of the Cymry, time began
 “ to be calculated according to the years of Christ.
 “ Some maintain that the periods of every proclama-
 “ tion of country and congress ought to be dated from
 “ the time of Prydain, according to the usage of the
 “ primitive Cymry; others will have that and the
 “ year of Christ together; others will have none but
 “ the year of Christ.”¹

It ought to be remarked that the latter portion of the preceding extract refers to practices or opinions as late as the middle of the last century.

“ Before the time of Christ’s advent in the flesh <sup>Memorial and com-
 and com-
 putation.</sup>
 “ the Bards celebrated times according to the years of
 “ memorial and computation, that is to say, from the
 “ time of Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great, who
 “ was famous five hundred and sixty-six years before
 “ the birth of Christ in the flesh. From that period
 “ it is usual for the Bards to celebrate the time of
 “ memorial and computation in conjunction with the
 “ year of Christ. Prydain, the son of Aedd the Great,
 “ as far as it is remembered and known, existed the
 “ above mentioned time before the birth of Christ,
 “ and, according to the conjecture of the sages and well
 “ informed herald Bards, six hundred and fifty years
 “ after the first arrival of the nation of the Cymry
 “ in the isle of Britain, that is to say, one thousand
 “ two hundred and sixteen years before the birth of
 “ Christ, the nation of the Cymry first came into the
 “ isle of Britain, and this is called Brut’s time, for
 “ the years of memorial and computation in old
 “ times were reckoned conjecturally from the time of
 “ Brut, which was about a thousand years after the
 “ demolition of the tower of Nimrod the Giant, and

¹ MS. of John Bradford, who flourished about 1760.

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“ about two thousand eight hundred years after the
 “ expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, namely,
 “ five (*al.* nine) hundred years after God had created
 “ this world.”

The following is from a record of Henry the Seventh's time:—¹

A record
of Henry
VII's time.

“ This Howel [*i.e.* Howel the Good] gave wise and
 “ just laws to the nation of the Cymry, and ordained
 “ that chronological records should be dated from the
 “ year of Christ, the Son of God, and His coming in
 “ the flesh, as it is at this day.”

Edict of
Arthur.

We may add, on the authority of a scrupulously faithful antiquary, and one that was deeply versed in the traditions of his order—the late Iolo Morganwg, that king Arthur in his institutes of the Round Table introduced the age of the world for events which occurred before Christ, and the year of Christ's nativity for all subsequent events.

Summary
of the pre-
ceding
authorities.

The summary of the preceding authorities, then, as far as they bear upon the question we are investigating, is this;—that previous to the time of Prydain there was no uniform and regular method of recording occurrences—that subsequently periods of time were computed from his era—that this mode was continued until after the introduction of Christianity into the island, when, to some extent, the year of Christ was adopted—that the Bards for the most part adhered to the old rule of *Cov a Chyvriv* until the time of Arthur, when events that occurred before the Christian era were enjoined to be dated accord-

¹ Iolo MSS. p. 39. The date of this record may be ascertained from the following passage in it:—
 “ From the time of Howel the Good
 “ to *this present year of the coro-*
 “ *nation of King Henry the VII.*”

“ the son of Edmund, the son of
 “ Owain Tudur (all of them being
 “ genuine Britons of the primitive
 “ royal lineage) five hundred and
 “ forty-five years.”

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ing to the age of the world, and subsequent events from the Nativity—that Howel the Good ordained chronological records to be dated from the year of Christ’s coming in the flesh¹—and that until a comparatively late period the Bards were in the habit of dating the holding of their congresses sometimes simply from the era of Prydain—sometimes from that and the year of Christ conjointly, though it would seem that other events were chronicled by them invariably after the Christian mode.

Though the language of these extracts would lead us to suppose that the Christian computation was more or less adopted by the Britons immediately upon their conversion to the faith, we can hardly conclude that such was really the case, for it was not even established in Italy before the sixth century. Perhaps we ought to consider the authorities in question as referring in general to the time subsequently to the introduction of Christianity, without intending to ascribe the change of chronological usage to that particular period—a view which receives support in some degree from what is said of Arthur, and his edict.

But have we any early records by which we could test the correctness of the above assertions? There is every reason to believe that a few of the Historical Triads are genuine memorials of Druidic times; for though they might not have been committed to writing until, perhaps, the twelfth century, yet it is very probable that they were respectively compiled, when the last event of each was still fresh in the memory. Internal evidence points to the remotest antiquity.²

¹ It is not quite clear whether “dyfodiad ynghnawd,” here literally translated *coming in the flesh*, was meant by the chroniclers to express the Annunciation, or simply the Nativity.

² “The Historical Triads have been obviously put together at very different times. Some allude to circumstances about the first population and early history of the island, of which every other
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Being thus framed, they would be publicly recited at the periodic festivals of the Bards, and the repeated recitation would be the sure means of preventing all interpolation and corruption. Indeed written literature might be more easily tampered with in those days than oral traditions, thus, as it were, nationally stereotyped. The only circumstance that would affect their transmission would be the impracticability of meeting in a national convention, as, no doubt, was the case during parts of the Roman domination. Whenever that difficulty offered itself, the duty of preserving such records devolved upon individual members of the Bardic Institute, meeting in groups of twos or threes, and interchanging communications, couched in the language of secrecy.

The Triads
void of
dates.

The Triads furnish only the *order* in which occurrences took place; they afford us no clue as to the exact date when they severally happened, nor as to the length of the interval that elapsed between each event. We may be allowed to suppose, however, that these particulars were in early times well known to the Britons from a reference to the Gorseddau, or Bardic congresses, which were held (efficiently) every three years, and that in this respect something like the Greek Olympiad was in vogue; but of this we have no intimation.

“ memorial has perished. The
“ Triads were noticed by Camden
“ with respect. Mr. Vaughan, the
“ antiquary of Hengwrt, refers them
“ to the seventh century. Some
“ may be the records of more recent
“ date. I think them the most
“ curious, on the whole, of all the
“ Welsh remains.”—*A Vindication
of the Ancient British Poems, by
Sharon Turner, Esq., F.A.S., 1803,*
p. 131.

“ The Triades of the Isle of
“ Britain, as they are called, are
“ some of the most curious and
“ valuable fragments preserved in
“ the Welsh language. They re-
“ late of persons and events from
“ the earliest times to the begin-
“ ning of the seventh century.”—
*The Heroic Elegies, &c., of Llywarch
Hen, by William Owen, p. viii.*

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Great events alone were embodied in the triadic records. Particulars of minor importance were most probably recollected from their relative connection with the greater ones, but were entrusted to the less certain medium of song, or even to the unaided memory, and were consequently more liable to suffer perversion from the lapse of time.

From the Triads we turn to the Poems of the sixth century, which are pronounced by all competent judges to be authentic productions of the times to which they are usually assigned.¹ Here again we fail to find anything like acknowledged chronology, though there are several allusions to the Triads, which prove that the triadic mode of perpetuating the memory of events was as old at least as the sixth century.

Gildas, who, though he wrote in Latin, was of Cymric extraction, being the son of Caw, lord of Cwm Cowlwyd in the North, leaves us in his Treatise "De Excidio Britanniae" hardly any trace of a chronological computation. The only event to which he assigns a date is that of the composition of his work, which he particularizes as being the 44th year from the siege of Mount Badon,² thus confirming our theory as to minor events, that they were remembered from their association with national epochs.

The Book, bearing the name of Nennius, contains several chronological modes:—it calculates from the Creation—from the Incarnation and Passion—and in reference to some prominent or well-known event. There are allusions made in it to the number of years by which one event preceded and another followed the nativity of Christ. All this variety

See especially Sharon Turner's "Vindication of the Ancient British Poems."

² Cap. xxvi. According to *Annales Cambriae* the battle of Mount Badon took place A.D. 516.

plainly shows that the mode of registering occurrences was still in a very unsettled state.

First
edition of
Nennius.

The earliest edition of Nennius, of which we have any account, was issued A.D. 674, as is inferred from the manner in which the Editor describes the then current year as the 647th from the Passion of Christ.¹ In this edition both the Nativity and the Passion are taken as points from which computations are made.

Second
edition.

The date of the second edition is said to concur with the fourth year of Mervyn, king of Britain;² that is about A.D. 823. In the Harleian Manuscript 3859, as well as others, we have a specimen of the chronology of this period, in the following passages:—
“ Ab Adam vero usque ad Passionem Christi anni sunt
“ quinque millia ducenti viginti octo; a Passione autem
“ Christi peracti sunt anni 796, ab Incarnatione autem
“ ejus anni sunt 832,” intended probably for 823.
Again:—“ A primo anno quo Saxones venerunt in
“ Britanniam usque ad annum quartum Mervini regis
“ supputantur anni ccccxxix.”

Third
edition.

The date of the third edition is A.D. 858, which in Chapter XI. is marked as the current year in this way;—from our Lord's Incarnation to the Advent of St. Patrick into Ireland there are twenty-three cycles of nineteen years, and these make up 437 years; from the Advent of St. Patrick to the cycle in which

¹ Thus the “*Historia*” in the Vatican reads: “*Quando Gratianus Æquantius Consul fuit in Roma, quia tunc a consulibus Romanorum totus orbis regebatur, Saxones a Guortheginno, anno post Domini Passionem trecentesimo quadregesimo septimo suscepti sunt: ad hunc quem (quo) nunc scribimus annum sexcentisimam quadregesimum septimum numeramus.*”

² According to the best known authorities, Mervyn Vrych, or the Freckled, son of Nest, daughter of Cadell of Vale Royal, prince of Powys, is said to have succeeded to the principality of Gwynedd in right of his wife Essyllt, daughter of Cynan Tindaethwy, about A.D. 818 or 819.

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we now are there are twenty-two cycles and three years in ogdoad of another cycle, which make up 421 years; in all 858.

In fixing the date of the fourth edition, the Editor makes the following computation: "A Passione autem Christi peracti sunt anni DCCCLXXX.¹ Ab Incarnatione autem ejus anni sunt DCCCVII¹ usque ad tricesimum annum Anarauht² regis Moniæ, id est, Mon, qui regit modo regnum Wenedotiæ regionis, id est Guernet; fiunt igitur ab exordio mundi usque in annum præsentem 6108;" which makes the current year to be A.D. 907.

The current year of the fifth edition is thus indicated:—"Ita simul fiunt ab Adam usque ad Prædicationem Christi et 15 annum imperii Imperatoris Tiberii 5228. A Passione Christi peracti sunt anni 946. Ab Incarnatione autem ejus sunt anni 977."

In the documents, to which we have thus adverted, we do not discover any direct indication of a Prydain chronology; at the same time they contain nothing which tends to contradict it. The usage might have been observed more especially by the Bardic fraternity. Indèed we are in possession of chronological notices which profess to be in reality portions of the Register called "Cov a Chyvrviv;" one in particular is printed in the collection known as the Iolo MSS.; and though, in its present form, not older than A.D. 1485, it purports to have been compiled on the ancient model. Thus runs the heading:—"Here follow the periods of memorial and computation, according to

¹ The numerals vary in most manuscripts. Those here supplied are concurrent with the year of the world 6108, according to the Eusebian calculation.

² Anarawd was the eldest son of Rhodri the Great, and grandson of Mervyn the Freckled. He is said to have succeeded to the principality of Gwynedd, or North Wales, about A.D. 877.

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“ the old system of the Bards of the Isle of Britain,
 “ as they were recorded and computed before the
 “ nation of the Cymry obtained the faith in Christ,
 “ and after that were introduced memorial and com-
 “ putation in respect of the time of Christ’s coming
 “ in the flesh, as is the case in every country in
 “ Christendom.” And at its close is this sentence ;—
 “ And thus is the information relating to the periods
 “ of memorial and computation of years, and the
 “ events of those years, as verified by scrutinizing
 “ investigation in respect of well-known and parti-
 “ cular years and times, which were warranted by
 “ memorials and records drawn up according to the
 “ direction, memorials, and sciences of ancient wise
 “ men, literary persons, and the sciences of letters.”¹

Chrono-
 logy of the
 document.

In this chronicle the number of years which elapsed between remarkable epochs only is recorded ; so that the date of a distant event is not computed directly from Prydain, but is ascertainable in reference to him by the process of adding up the numerical lengths of the several stages, which make up the intermediate series. Thus, if we wished to know how many years after Prydain Beli the Great flourished, we should have to add up the following :—twenty-nine years, which happened between Prydain and Dyvnvarth ; a hundred and twenty-eight between Dyvnvarth and Gwrgan Varvdrwch ; two hundred and four between Gwrgan and Morydd ; forty-seven between Morydd and the period of Owen and Peredur ; a hundred and eighteen between the death of Peredur and Blegywryd ; and seventy-nine years between Blegywryd and Beli the Great ; and accordingly we should arrive at the year 605. In this respect, indeed, it countenances the supposition that

¹ See Iolo MSS. p. 36.

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the mode of computing from remarkable eras, adopted in Gildas and Nennius, was in reality founded upon the Prydain chronology.

It is remarkable that the several editions of Nennius, occupying a little more than three hundred years, exhibit a great similarity one to the other in the manner of chronicling events. Perhaps, this may be accounted for on the supposition that the editors successively did not consider themselves at liberty to deviate to any considerable extent from the rule adopted by their respective predecessors,—that they were impressed with the opinion that the mode of chronology, as well as the language of the narrative should be disturbed as little as possible. We perceive, however, a general tendency in them all to make the Christian era the grand point of chronology, especially for events which happened subsequently to the Nativity, though without discarding the year of the world. Both being thus in some degree coupled together would seem to substantiate the tradition about Arthur and his royal edict. Even Asser,¹ who generally dates from the Incarnation, might have derived the usage principally from his native land.

We do not mean to insinuate that the Britons were in no respect influenced by foreign authorities in the matters of arranging their chronological system; on the contrary, as Wales was in the sixth century studded with schools and colleges, in which the most eminent of our native saints and philosophers received their education, we think it very likely that these would avail themselves of all means of knowledge within their reach, whether derived from the works of Eusebius, St. Jerome, Prosper of Aqu-

Mutual similarity of the several editions of Nennius in point of chronology.

The Welsh not uninfluenced by foreign authorities.

¹ According to the Welsh pedigrees, Asser was the son of Tudwal, the son of Rhodri the Great.

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taine, or from Irish books. Such a course would have been quite in unison with the object of the Bardic Institute, of which St. David, St. Teilo, and St. Padarn, were members.¹ There was nothing that they could borrow from the Anglo-Saxons before the time of Bede, who, however, was not born when the work usually assigned to Nennius was first issued.

Borrowed
from an
Irish
chronicle.

In the tenth century we find that they did borrow from an Irish chronicle, at least in the matter of events and transactions.

Annales
Cambriæ.

The "Annales Cambriæ" is the first approach to a regular register of Welsh occurrences that meets our notice, and is apparently the basis of all subsequent chronicles relative to the principality of Wales. The chronology of this document is designated by the repetition of the word "annus" for each successive year, whether blank or otherwise, whilst every tenth year is marked x. xx, &c. From a comparison of dates assigned to many of the events noticed in it by other writers, it would appear that the era on which its chronology rests would concur with the year 444 of the Incarnation. There is no reason given for this particular date; but if it refers to some incident in the apostleship of St. Patrick, it may be taken as an argument in favour of the Irish origin of the chronicle. The mission of St. Patrick was adopted as a chronological stage or epoch even in Nennius.

When
compiled.

The "Annales Cambriæ" is supposed to have been originally compiled in the year 954, at which date the chronicle ends in the oldest manuscript.

By whom.

The writer was evidently a partisan of Owain, son of Howel the Good, as he affixes the pedigree of that Prince to his chronicle.²

¹ "The three blessed Bards of
" Baptism of the Isle of Britain;
" Dewi, Teilo and Padarn." Triads
of the Bards (unpublished).

² The oldest copy of this chronicle
is a manuscript in the Harleian collection,
No. 3859.