

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ROMAN OCCUPATION UPON  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN CUMBER-  
LAND AND WESTMORLAND.

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The subject of the moral condition, numerical strength, and political organization of the Northern Britons in the period succeeding the Roman evacuation is one of great obscurity. In the following pages we shall call attention to a certain group of facts; which being determined by only one of numerous methods of investigation, needs unquestionably to be examined alongside a quantity of other evidence. This, however, is not the purpose of the present paper, in which we shall attempt only to approach a difficult subject from a particular standpoint: and it will remain to be judged whether certain conclusions, pointed to mainly by archæological evidence, can be overridden by the united testimony of the Welsh and Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and the Annals of the early Celtic Church. It seems to us, however, that before such a question can be conclusively answered, a much larger area than that we treat of—the Northern half of the Province of Britain in fact—should be subjected to an examination on the lines which we propose to attempt here.

Most people who have travelled at all widely in the old world must have been struck by the fact that in some countries, such as the Nile Valley, continuity of residence has been the general rule from remote ages; that is to say, that although some countries have, no less than others, been subject to conquest by alien races, and have been repeatedly swept over, and occupied or colonized, by new waves of conquest, the original centres of population have been invariably re-inhabited: whereas in other countries, densely populated in ancient times, the newer arrivals have ignored the sites of early towns and villages, which can now be traced only by mounds and ruins. As a type of this class we may take the lower Euphrates especially as, like the sister valley of the Nile, it was the scene of one of the great Biblical civilizations, and fell at the same periods approximately, beneath the Roman Eagle and crescent of Islam.

Of course there are reasons for these anomalies, although they are not in all cases very apparent. There are many things to consider: the vigour or degeneracy of the conquered race; the question whether it was only subdued or whether it was exterminated or dispersed; or, in the case of the occupation of a barbarous country by a civilized power, whether the garrison was ultimately entirely withdrawn, and if so, whether the withdrawal was, or was not, followed by internal political complications, or aggression on the part of neighbouring peoples. We should also look at the habits and customs of any supplanting or incoming race; and examine the suitability of the old sites for their requirements. For in some cases the newcomers may have been precluded, by a narrow geographical range, from forming new centres, and have become merged in the conquered population: while in others a wide and varied country face may have encouraged them to pick and choose according to their traditional requirements, and so neglect the existing towns.

Most of us who have examined at all carefully the Archæological map of our district (Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire over Sands) will probably have been struck by the fact that while the known Roman sites are very numerous, the number which are occupied by ancient towns or villages is comparatively small; the actual ratio, as we shall see, being in fact about ten or eleven out of about thirty-five of the principal castra or stations. In the following pages we shall try to find an explanation of this. In the ensuing table—

Column A	contains	Roman camps, the sites of which are occupied, or surrounded, by ancient market towns or villages.
Column B	„	Camps, the sites of which are unoccupied by, and isolated from, ancient towns or villages.
Column C	„	Camps, the sites of which are adjacent to an ancient town or important village.
Column D	„	Camps, within which, or close to which, are ancient parish churches.
Column E	„	Camps containing the site of a mediæval castle or stronghold.
Column F	„	Camps contiguous to harbours or roadsteads.

R.W. = Roman Wall.

CAMPS, &c.	A. Occupied by an ancient village.	B. Unoccupied and isolated.	C. Adjacent to an ancient village.	D. Parish church.	E. Mediaeval castle.	F. Ancient harbour.
1. Bewcastle .. .. .	—	—	—	St. Mary or St. Cuthbert (close to).	1	—
2. Birdswald, R. W... ..	—	1	—	—	—	—
3. Borrans Ring (Ambleside) .. ..	—	—	Near Ambleside.	—	—	—
4. Bowness-on-Solway, R. W. .. ..	1	—	—	St. Michael (close to).	—	—
5. Brampton (?), R. W. .. ..	—	—	Near Brampton.	—	—	—
6. Brough-under-Stanemore.. ..	1	—	—	—	1	—
7. Brougham .. .. .	—	—	Near Penrith.	—	1	—
8. Burgh-on-Sands, R. W. .. ..	1	—	—	St. Michael.	—	—
9. Burrow Walls (Workington) .. ..	—	1 (?)	—	—	1	Workington.
10. Cambeck Fort (Castlesteads), R. W.	—	1	—	—	—	—
11. Carlisle, R. W. .. .. .	1	—	—	1	—	—
12. Caermot .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
13. Copeland Beck .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
14. Dalton-in-Furness .. .. .	1	—	—	St. Mary.	—	—
15. Drumburgh, R. W. .. .. .	—	1 (?)	—	—	—	—
16. Egremont (site doubtful).. ..	1	—	—	St. Mary or St. Michael(?)	1 (?)	—
17. Ellenborough .. .. .	—	—	Near Maryport.	—	—	Maryport.
18. Hardknott .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
19. Keswick (camp site doubtful) .. ..	1 (?)	—	—	—	—	—
20. Kirkby Thore .. .. .	1	—	—	—	1 (Whelp Castle).	—
21. Low Borrow bridge .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
22. Maiden Castle (Stanemore) .. ..	—	1	—	—	—	—
23. Mawbray or Mawburgh .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	St. Catherines hole (Rondstead). Parton. Ravenglass.
24. Moresby .. .. .	1 (?)	1 (?)	—	St. Bridget.	—	—
25. Muncaster .. .. .	—	—	Near Ravenglass.	—	—	—
26. Netherby .. .. .	—	1	—	—	1	—
27. Old Carlisle (Wigton) .. .. .	—	—	Near Wigton	—	—	—
28. Pap Castle .. .. .	—	—	Near Cockermouth.	—	1 (Pipers Castle).	—
29. Plumpton Wall (Old Penrith) .. ..	—	1	—	—	—	—
30. Redlands (Crackenthorpe Common)	—	1	—	—	—	—
31. Reyecross .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
32. Stanwix, R. W. .. .. .	1	—	—	St. Michael.	—	—
33. Watcheross (?), R. W. .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
34. Watercrook (Kendal) .. .. .	—	—	Near Kendal.	—	—	—
35. Whitbarrow .. .. .	—	1	—	—	—	—
Approximate Totals .. .. .	10	17	8	8	8	5

#### NOTE TO THE TABLE.

It is almost impossible to reduce this table to any degree of exactness. Moresby, for instance, occurs in both Columns A and B, because it contains the church, and perhaps the ancient village was alongside it. In Column B there is really an ancient village at Drumburgh, though it is unimportant. Burrow Walls is close to Workington, a modern development as a town; but looking at the name, we conclude there was an early Anglian settlement there, so that perhaps Burrow Walls should really be in Column C. In Column C, in like manner, Ellenborough is two-thirds of a mile from Maryport, which is modern, but had an ancient settlement on the Castle Hill. In the same column also occurs Brampton, which we hear has recently been dug into, and is believed to be non-Roman. But since it has been always classed as a Roman Station, we necessarily include it until the evidence for its elimination be published. In Column D the exact boundaries of the original camp area at Carlisle, Egremout, and Dalton are uncertain, so that it cannot be said whether the church is or is not included by them. The mediæval stronghold which gives Burrow Walls a place in Column E rests only on evidence which must be examined in Hutchinson's *Cumberland*, p. 262, and *Transactions C. and W. Antiq. and Arch. Assoc.*, V, 22. Walls Castle, really a Roman villa just outside the Muncaster camp, was by tradition the ancient Castle of the Penningtons; and it certainly seems possible that it may owe its preservation to adoption in early times as a fortress. In Column F it should be noted that all the harbours were probably used in Roman times, though Parton and Maryport were modern re-developments. It seems, however, doubtful if any except Ravenglass were in regular use in early mediæval days.

On looking at this table a number of questions, by no means easy to answer, at once present themselves. To begin with, the first three columns raise an interesting point, viz. to what extent the camps themselves influenced the placing of the various Teutonic settlements. The fourth column naturally suggests further scrutiny of the supposed Roman-British and early churches, while the list of names of sites, offers a mass of material which requires sifting for indications of the races which settled in or near the camps.

Of what may be termed reliable historical information relating to our own locality at the close of the Roman occupation and the period immediately succeeding it, there is very little indeed. What there is we shall later revert to. But were we in absolute darkness we should naturally conclude that the buildings, barracks, and towns lying behind the Cumberland wall would be occupied, upon the withdrawal of the Roman garrison, by the Britons in the vicinity. The Roman occupation must have bequeathed to the district a considerable semi-Romanized population of mixed blood—a poor hybrid race, there is reason to believe, washed over little more than skin-deep with a coat of Roman culture. Yet though we may be justified in believing this to have been the case, it is undoubtedly a matter of much difficulty to decide whether, and if so for how long, they retained any semblance of civil or military organization or political cohesion.

History has often shewn that though the occupation of a weak or barbarous country by a strong civilized power may improve the country, it does not always succeed in improving the people. We all know what would happen if England withdrew from Egypt, and it is quite possible that a similar lapse might take place in Britain on the termination of Roman rule. Roman civilization in Northern Britain may have been a shallow veneer only; because in spite of the advantages they inherited in the shape of fortified strongholds and roads, some acquaintance surely with architecture, engineering, and military discipline, the figure they make in local history in subsequent centuries is insignificant. The stage becomes crowded with the warlike and barbaric

figures of the Angles and Norse, while the Britons themselves, in spite of their 330 years of Roman tuition, appear as mere "supers."

### *The Teutonic Settlements.*

The first method we shall attempt for elucidating these obscure questions is that of examining as well as we can, the systems followed by the various Teutonic settlers when they took up the land. The sites adopted in such settlements would in most cases be dictated partly by the productive quality of the land they invaded, partly by the position of actual sites occupied by the inhabitants, partly by the amount of successful opposition they encountered, and of course partly by their own wants and habits. If we find on the one hand that the newcomers habitually occupied the camp sites, the natural conclusion would be that they found them habitable, and that they expelled the occupants and took their homes. If on the other hand they avoided them, it would point rather to the invaders finding them uninhabited and uninhabitable, though it is certainly a possible hypothesis that, under certain circumstances, newcomers might settle without conflict with, and in the neighbourhood of, the occupying race.

The various events in the Anglian advance from the East, which led up to the settlement of the more fertile districts of Cumberland and Westmorland, need hardly detain us here<sup>1</sup>: it is sufficient to say that while some few Anglians may have established themselves soon after the occupation of the Dee and Mersey districts, it is generally agreed that it was during the time of Ecgrith

<sup>1</sup> The principal are—

c. 607.—The splitting in two of the Kymric realm by the English occupation of Dee and Mersey district. Battle of Chester 607. After this the Lake district became the southern end of Northern Cumbria or Strathclyde, although south of the River Derwent was perhaps considered Anglian by the Angles.

635.—Victory of Oswald over Caedwalla near Hexham. Mission work of Aidan. Bewcastle cross erected 670.

670–685.—Cumbrian Britons broken up by Ecgrith and possibly driven into the hills of the Lake district. The Cumberland and Westmorland plain settled by the Angles. About this time the southern parts of the counties were regarded as Deiran territory.

677.—Gift to St. Cuthbert by Ecgrith, of Cartmel and all the Britons in it (Bede).

685.—Gift to St. Cuthbert by the same King, of Carlisle and fifteen miles round it (Simeon of Durham).

(670–685) that most of the early settlements were made. It was therefore only some 260 years after the final withdrawal of Roman government.

The Anglian advance entered the district from the East following the Roman wall, on the line of which they placed numerous settlements adjacent to, but seldom upon, the Roman castra. From Carlisle they swept round the coast by the older Roman road, and they spread along other Roman ways to Wigton, the Penrith district, and to Englewood: and again we shall find that they carefully avoided occupying the actual Roman centres.<sup>1</sup>

It may be convenient to make an examination of the names in some detail as we proceed; but we must be cautious not to place too much reliance on this method. The analysis of the modern names of Roman camps would have considerable value if every site had a name of its own, and was not named, as is often the case, from an adjacent village or physical feature. Moreover, the derivation of place names is as yet no exact science, and often even when sure of the meaning, we cannot be equally certain of the language from which it is directly derivable.<sup>2</sup>

To begin with, Column A of our table shews only three Roman camps the sites of which are occupied by ancient towns, the names of which appear to be Anglian or Anglo-Saxon. They are Dalton, Burgh, and Brough.

The last two belong to a particular group of names which, occurring as they do in our district in an Anglian settled locality, we are probably justified in deriving from the A.S. "burh,"<sup>3</sup> which again represents the Greek *πίργος* and the Latin "burgum." Vegetius (A.D. 375) defines the

<sup>1</sup> For practical purposes we may ignore the Saxons as a separate factor in race immigration in our district. "Ham," the test word, is found in South Westmorland and Furness as Heversham, Beetham, and Aldingham. Further north, Brougham is a Roman site, but it looks like a corruption of Brocavum, its Roman name. "Ham" is certainly, in some cases, a corruption of "holm."

<sup>2</sup> The derivations, or perhaps it should

be said, the classification, of the names here suggested, are at best only tentative: for though the present writer has visited a large number of the ancient sites, he cannot claim great familiarity with the various neighbourhoods.

<sup>3</sup> It is remarkable that Dr. Christison cannot find any regular application of the forms "burrow," "burgh," &c., in Scotland earlier than the beginning of the twelfth century. *Early Fortifications in Scotland*, p. 41, &c.

smallest kind of Roman fortress "Castellum parvum quod burgum vocant."<sup>1</sup>

But in this group of names we find altogether—

Burgh on Sands. R.W. (Burgo in the Wetheral Chartulary.)

Brough under Stanemore. (Burgo in the Wetheral Chartulary.)

Mawburgh.

Birdoswald (Burgh Oswald). R.W. (Bordoswald in the Wetheral Chartulary.)

Ellenborough.

Burrow walls.

Low Borrow bridge.

Whitbarrow (probably correctly Whiteborough).

Brougham (perhaps the A.S. edition of Brocavum).

Drumburgh. R.W. The ancient forms Drumboc and Drumbegh render this extremely doubtful.

Here we observe that though we have nine or ten camps, which were apparently named by the Angles as towers or fortifications, there appear to have been only two—Burgh on Sands and Brough—where settlements were made which became permanent.

Turning to the Anglian test word "ton," we find a group equally suggestive—

Dalton, believed to occupy site of a Roman camp.

Workington, near the camp Burrow walls.

Wigton, " " Old Carlisle.

Plumpton, " " Castlesteads (old Penrith).

Walton. R.W. " " Castlesteads.

Irthington. R.W. " " Watchcross.

Brampton, " " Brampton camp,

which apparently indicates that the Anglians planted one "ton" settlement on a camp site, and five or six in the immediate vicinity of, but not upon, the actual sites of

<sup>1</sup> The Norse may have picked up their "borg" and the Arabs their "burj"

from their respective early collisions and connections with the Byzantines.



Roman camps. In other words, in all the cases except one the actual camp site was purposely avoided.<sup>1</sup>

What Danish influence can be traced in our locality, is due to the incursions of Halfdene, who ravaged Cumberland, sacked Carlisle, and sore distressed the Strathclyde Welsh in 875, or something less than 500 years after the Roman evacuation. The countrymen of Halfdene who settled in the district were by no means so numerous as the Angles: though, in the same way, we can trace them along the lines of Roman road by the place names, in their advance from the East.

The Danish "bys" were often planted cheek by jowl alongside the Anglian "tons." The camps which remain unoccupied, and in the vicinity of which Danish settlements can be traced, are numerous. On the other hand, we find four camps only, which from their names may have been appropriated by Danes: and of these, one—Netherby—now contains a stronghold instead of a village. They are—

Moresby.  
Netherby.  
Kirkby Thore.  
Stanwix. R.W.

The Norse immigration came over the sea from the West, but the date, unrecorded in history, is not even yet quite certain. It was, however, either in the latter half

<sup>1</sup> "Mot" in Caernot, perhaps Anglian, is very difficult to deal with. It seems to be identical with "mota," the name of the A.S. "burhs" in post-Conquest charters. But there is no evidence that in Anglo-Saxon times this class of earthwork was known to the people by any other word than "burh." Yet in Scotland, at the present day, they are often called "Motes," and also in our own district, where we find the characteristic examples of Aldingham, Liddell, and Brampton Motes. To account for this, it has been suggested that the word was introduced into the north in post-Conquest times; and it is worth noting that in Galloway there are numerous forts thus known which are not of the A.S. "burh" type. (See Christison's *Early Fortifications in Scotland*, Chaps. I-III.)

If we accept the assumption that "mot," as applied to any sort of fortification, is of late introduction in the north, we may possibly be justified in classing with it such fortified sites as contain "mont," which perhaps indicates the original form. Thus Egremont (Agremont *temp.* Hen. II) has a very Norman-Latin sound, though Mr. Collingwood suggests Egner-mot, the "mot" on the Egen or Ehen formed with the Scandinavian genitive. On the other hand, Eamont (spelled by Leland Emot) has been tentatively identified with Eamot or Eamotum, the site of Athelstan's treaty in 926 (A.S. Chronicle). Whether this identification be correct or not, it seems possible that the name originally was applied to the Roman camp at Brougham or the great stony ring at Mayborough, and not to the river.

of the ninth century or in the middle of the tenth.<sup>1</sup> The Vikings took little notice of Roman roads and cared nought for Roman camps. They marched straight up into the fells, and settled right and left in the very hiding places where the Britons are supposed to have been if the earlier date be the true one. If it be not, and the Norse did not come till after the battle of Dunmail Raise in 945, the Britons had got their quietus; but whichever was the case, it is plain that though the Vikings had no particular taste for the neighbourhood of the Angles and Danes near the sea, they did not care two straws for all the Britons who were in the fells when they arrived.

Norse place-names, therefore, do not help this enquiry very much, because there are few camps in the fells where the Norsemen chiefly settled. Keswick and Bowness on Solway are, however, perhaps examples of camp sites actually settled; but neither example is reliable, for Bowness may be Danish, while the actual site of the Keswick camp, and also the derivation of the name are questionable. On the other hand, Ambleside and Kendal may be fairly taken as examples of Norse settlements placed purposely clear of Roman camps. The name Borrans applied to the first, and Burwens, at Kirkby Thore, may be Celtic loan words or adoptions into the vocabularies of the Scandinavian settlers.<sup>2</sup>

The word "castle," found at at least nine or ten Roman sites,<sup>3</sup> may be an echo of the Roman "castellum" or of kindred Celtic forms, but it seems likely that it was not applied to the ruined camps till the date when "castle" was the recognized popular word for a fortress. Considering how varied were the elements which formed the people, that date would probably be comparatively late.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The later theory, based on certain data in the Sagas, is that it took place between 870 and 895. The older one, that the immigration followed the wasting of Cumbria by King Edmund, and the battle of Dunmail Raise (945).

<sup>2</sup> Various and widely distributed forms are found in Ireland, Scotland, Orkney, Man, and Cumbria: sometimes applied to natural rocky excrescences, in other cases to ruined sites. A "borran" in the Lakes is still a heap of rocky debris or a cairn.

<sup>3</sup> Castlesteads at Watercrock, Plumpton Wall, and Cambeck Fort, Castle-rigg and Crag near Keswick: Hardknott Castle. The Castle, an old name for the Ambleside Camp (*vide* West's *Guide*), Castlefields, Mawburgh. Bewcastle and Pap Castle contained the mediæval fortresses of Bueth and Piperd.

<sup>4</sup> It would be possible, though probably not very profitable, to carry the enquiry into the origin of the site and settlement names a good deal further.

It is certain that the evidence of the settlements must have some sort of meaning; and it would seem that we are fairly justified in concluding that during all the period of Teutonic settlement, that is approximately from the middle of the seventh century to the middle of the tenth century, the rule of the newcomers was to avoid the old Roman centres. This is especially noticeable on the Roman wall along which the Angles, the most numerous of all the immigrant races, entered the country. For on the Cumberland part of the Wall there are about nine large castra and minor stations between Birdoswald and Bowness inclusive, yet only four—Bowness, Burgh, Stanwix, and Carlisle<sup>1</sup>—retained a continuity of population through to mediæval and modern times.<sup>2</sup> We find also in our table that seven or eight ancient towns or settlements, all still populous, were purposely built a mile or so clear of the old castra. Why so? May we not fairly answer that the settlers found them uninhabited ruins, and, ignorant of their history, regarded them superstitiously as the work of the devil or of enchanters. For the same reasons numerous other sites were carefully given a wide berth. Yet we find that about eight camps contained mediæval castles; but this may only mark the decay of superstition as the country people in a few centuries became familiar with the ruins.

Clearly, if, when the Angles came about 670, the Roman

It may, however, be worth while to apply the same method of classification to Columns A, B, and C of the Table. In Column A (sites occupied) we find one site with a pure Celtic name—Carlisle; three with names probably Anglian—Dalton, Burgh and Brough; and three with Danish names—Stanwix, Moresby, and Kirkby Thore; while two—Bowness and Keswick—are presumably Norse, and one—Egremont—perhaps mediæval.

In Column B (unoccupied sites) Maiden Castle is alone certainly Celtic; six—Birdoswald, Burrow walls, Mawburgh, Plumpton wall, Low Borrow bridge, and Whitbarrow—apparently Angle or A.S.; one Danish—Netherby. Cambeck sounds Norse, but Mr. Collingwood suggests it retains a familiar name applied to St. Finian; and the remainder are mediæval or uncertain.

In Column C (where the settlements are clear of the sites) the adjacent settlements are two Angle or A.S.—Brampton and Wigton; two Norse—Ambleside and Kendal. The date of the old settlement at Maryport is uncertain. And the origin of Penrith and Ravenglass is obscure.

<sup>1</sup> As Chancellor Ferguson, in his *History of Cumberland* (p. 159) points out, the very fact that Carlisle retained its name shews that the 200 years during which the chroniclers say it was uninhabited must not be taken too literally.

<sup>2</sup> Carlisle retained, probably till 573, a sort of Roman supremacy in the north. Stanwix lived only, I think, as a suburb of Carlisle. Bowness and Burgh may have had special reasons for continuous existence, to which we shall refer later.

sites were still the centres of population, there would have been a struggle between the two races. Yet there does not seem to have been, because, if the Angles had beaten the Roman Britons, they would no doubt have occupied the enemy's strongholds. If the Angles were worsted, they would surely never have dared to settle so near the victors, if indeed they settled at all. What they seem to have done, was to plant their homesteads alongside the camps, because there the land was most fertile, but hardly ever on them, from ignorance and superstition. So also the Danes. On the other hand, the Norse knew they could not hit it off with their Teutonic brethren on the plains, and went straight to the fells. Evidently in the high ground also, the British were at that period an enemy not worth the consideration of a band of marauding Vikings.

#### *The Spread of Christianity.*

Another method can be applied to test the movements and condition of the Roman Britons when left to themselves. If we can establish the existence of a Christian Church before the earliest arrival of the Teutonic races, there must have been a resident population to work on. Further, if we can prove that these pre-Anglian missions planted the cross on the sites where the Romans had dwelt, we must conclude that the Britons still inhabited them, and either welcomed, as Christians, the priests of the faith, or if still Pagan accepted the faith itself. Conversely, if the early churches were placed clear of the Roman sites, the population must have been scattered, and certainly were not carrying on the traditions of Roman culture.

#### *The Roman-British Church.*

Christianity became practically the State religion of the Roman Empire with the proclamation of Constantine the Great in 324 A.D., although Paganism was not proscribed. At the final evacuation of Britain in 409, Christianity had been (with a brief break in the reign of Julian) the State religion of the empire for about 85 years: or, reckoning from the first withdrawal of the army in 387, from which date the neighbourhood of the Wall was a theatre of

bloodshed, there had been only some 63 years for the new faith to make its way among the Britons.

Although at first sight it seems remarkable that Christian relics of the Roman period are practically unknown in Cumberland, and are indeed of extreme rarity in Britain, the causes really are fairly plain. The disturbed condition of the Empire of the West during the fourth century when the very fabric of the realm was tottering, the great distance of the northern frontier of Britain from the Imperial capital, the fact that the garrison troops were chiefly levies from all corners of the Empire, and not native Italians, caused a complete neglect of religion in the district of the Roman Wall. There might be many zealous Christians among the officers; but to attempt to push the faith among the wild Batavians, Moors, or Spaniards would have probably brought the staff face to face with mutiny. No orders were issued for the erection of garrison churches, and the army of occupation remained, to all intents and purposes, a Pagan force.

The influence of at least four distinct Celtic Churches can still be traced in the district; and for convenience we may adopt Mr. W. G. Collingwood's handy classification,<sup>1</sup> though it must be understood that the date of each Church does not necessarily imply an equally early period in the local development:

- |                               |       |             |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1. Roman-British of Ninian    | ..    | 4th century |
| 2. Irish of Patrick           | .. .. | 5th ..      |
| 3. Kymric of Kentigern        | .. .. | 6th ..      |
| 4. Anglo-Scottish of Cuthbert |       | 7th ..      |

#### *The British Church of St. Ninian.*

The evidence of any local development of Ninian's Church south of the Wall in the fourth century is quite inadequate. Ninian, a Solway-born Briton, founded Whithern at the end of the fourth century, and died in 432 A.D. In our own part of Cumbria we find a Ninian church near Brougham (a Roman site), and wells at Brisco (fairly close to a main Roman road), and Loweswater (quite clear of Roman remains).

<sup>1</sup> In his paper "Lost Churches in the Carlisle Diocese."

The proposition made by Mr. Lees, that Ninian himself entered Cumberland as a mission field, never found much acceptance. As a matter of fact, if we reject entirely the idea of a Roman-British Church or a Roman-Christian garrison, the proposition falls to the ground.<sup>1</sup> If Ninian was enabled in such terrible times to enter Cumberland as a missionary, he would have to approach the Roman executive as the representatives of the Government and the head-quarters of the district. Can we imagine that he would have any encouragement from the military authorities, who from 396 to 402 had their hands full, and whose only policy, even in tranquil times, was to let religion slide completely in the garrison? Ninian might certainly be licensed to work among the British tribes which were not in contact with the garrison, but he would be peremptorily warned off all Roman stations, and no St. Ninian's Church, we may rest assured, was founded till well after 409 A.D. The very fact that two of the sites where the name is preserved are on Roman lines refer them almost conclusively to a post-Roman date. They may well be as late as the time of Kentigern.

### *The Irish Church of St. Patrick.*<sup>2</sup>

The Patrick and Bridget dedications undoubtedly bear witness to the presence of Irish missionaries in our district; but there appears to be no evidence that they are early. Mr. Collingwood, in his paper on "Lost Churches," says:—

"The traditional date of the founding of St. Bees about 650 is just the date of strong Irish influence in Anglian Cumbria. . . . There was constant intercourse between the Anglian Kingdom and Ireland."

The six churches dedicated to St. Bridget, Patrick's fellow worker, lie in a fairly compact group on the west side of Cumberland, and near the coast, just as we should

<sup>1</sup> See "St. Ninian's Church, Brougham," by Rev. Thomas Lees (*Trans. C. and W. Arch. and Antiq. Soc.*, IV, p. 420). Mr. Lees would bring Ninian to Brougham in 396, the very year Stilicho's legion came hurrying back to the border

to drive out the Picts and Scots, under whom the whole district was being wasted.

<sup>2</sup> St. Patrick was sent to Ireland 433 A.D., immediately after Ninian's death.

expect to find the traces of Irish missionaries. They are—

1. Bridekirk, about 2 miles from Papcastle Camp.
2. Brigham, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Papcastle.
3. Beckermest, 3 miles from the camp at Egremont.
4. Bassenthwaite, no camp in vicinity.
5. Moresby, in the camp.
6. Kirkbride,<sup>1</sup> where there is a doubtful Roman camp.

The attributions to St. Patrick are widely scattered, and far less satisfactory. Aspatria, and Patrickeld near Calder, which are both on the west of Cumberland, are no doubt authentic, and Patterdale also has both a church and a well, called from the saint.<sup>2</sup> All three are fairly close to Roman roads, but clear away from camps. But Preston Patrick and Bampton Patrick in Westmorland are doubtful, for they may have been named from an early Lord, although the Bampton Church is a Patrick dedication. Ousby in Cumberland is also questionable.

#### *The Kymric Church of St. Kentigern.*

There are eight Kentigern churches all lying north of the River Derwent. They are generally considered to be proprietary dedications, *i.e.* dedicated to the missionary who founded them. Kentigern visited Cumbria just after the middle of the sixth century, but possibly the churches were not erected till after the battle of Ardderyd (A.D. 573), which placed Rydderch Hael, the British chief, on the throne of Strathclyde, and recalled Kentigern to his nominal diocese.<sup>3</sup> They may therefore possibly be older than the Bridget and Patrick dedications.

<sup>1</sup> See R. S. Ferguson, *History of Cumberland*, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> It is worth noting, however, that a well at Gleaston in Furness, once Sir Michael's Well (after an early le Fleming), is now St. Michael's Well.

<sup>3</sup> This same battle of Ardderyd is so encrusted with the usual extravagant Celtic romance that its historical value

is uncertain; but there is good reason to believe it was partly the outcome of intrigues carried on by Columba and Kentigern among the various British princelings from Dalriada or Argyle to Wales proper. See also Canon Rawnsley's *St. Kentigern and St. Herbert*, 1892, pp. 38-41, 50 and 51.

The Kentigern churches are :—

1. Irthington.
2. Grinsdale.
3. Caldbeck.
4. Castle Sowerby.
5. Mungrisdale.
6. Crosthwaite.
7. Aspatria (apparently a re-dedication of a Patrick church).
8. Bromfield.

Of these, Irthington and Grinsdale are on the Roman Wall, but not at camps. Crosthwaite is carefully removed a short distance from the presumed camp at Keswick, and the other five are distinctively non-Roman.

The two Columba dedications, Askham and Warcop, may probably be put about the same date, *i.e.* after the middle of the sixth century. Here, again, they are on Roman roads, but not at Roman camps. The same remark applies to St. Columba's Well at Kirkby Lonsdale.

#### *The Anglo-Scottish Church of Cuthbert.*

The numerous St. Cuthbert dedications in the diocese are not of importance to this enquiry, as it has been shewn that a number of them date from the strange journey of the dead saint's body some two centuries after this time. The territorial grants of Carlisle and Cartmel to Cuthbert were however made in 670 and 685, and there is little doubt that Carlisle is a "proprietary" dedication of the seventh century.

With the exception of a few other dedications, such as the four churches of St. Oswald, and one of St. Begha, which may be early, but are not easy to place chronologically, the dedications in the Carlisle diocese are probably later than 685, and hardly require present consideration.

Summing up, it does not appear that there is any actual evidence of Christian foundations in the diocese before the sixth century ; and even in the end of it, when



the Kentigern churches were founded, there is nothing to shew that there was anything more than pioneer missionary work. But especially must the significant fact be noticed that all the eight Kentigern churches which preceded probably the Anglian settlements by 100 years were placed clear of Roman camps, although three were in Roman localities. Turning to the Patrician missionaries who, not improbably, were working contemporaneously with the Angle immigration, we find that, while following the Roman roads, they avoided the camp sites in five out of seven Bridget foundations. The few Patrick churches of which we have any certainty, tell the same tale. Yet the Roman camps were the very places where we might have expected at this period to find the densest, most cultivated, and intelligent British population. Again we cannot help asking, What can this indicate but that the Roman camps were mostly abandoned, and that the Britons were either very few in number or had reverted to the uncultured and barbarous condition in which the Romans had found them?

We have attempted to shew that with a Pagan garrison and a frontier subject to continuous bloodshed, a Roman-British Church in Cumberland was practically impossible. Any missionaries who might come before 409 would have to keep clear of the Roman castra; but there is no evidence that any ever came. Among seven churches now found in or near Roman posts there are but two which date before the end of the seventh century—that of Cuthbert at Carlisle, the history of which is clear; and that of St. Bridget at Moresby, which probably marks the landing point of an Irish missionary in the sixth or seventh century. The fact that this camp contains a church, *but no village*, again looks as if it was in ruins. The missionary built his church because stone was in plenty, and to hallow an unholy site. But his little band of followers camped outside in wigwams, and built houses only when the land was cleared of scrub.

On the other hand, Kentigern looked askance at the Roman ruins in Derwent valley. If the camp had been inhabited, his church would have been there; but it was a haunted ruin, so he planted his cross a little distance away. It looks as though the Norseman who came later

was a Pagan, and here preferred the haunted ruins to the proximity of the church.<sup>1</sup>

It will be urged, no doubt, that so far we have persistently followed certain lines of negative archæological evidence, and purposely neglected both local Celtic evidences and local history.

But, in regard to the first, what is there beyond the Celtic Church which we have discussed? There is no series of post-Roman British relics, nor indeed of structural remains that we can identify. But there are, as a matter of fact, a fairly numerous group of place-names, generally applied to the higher fells and to other physical features; but they, of course, do not bear in any way upon the position of the post-Roman Britons in regard to the camps.

Turning to the Roman sites themselves, we find that six names only have any appearance of being Celtic in origin, and several are very doubtful—

Carlisle (Caerluel, &c.).

Caermot.

Stone Carron (the old name of Whitbarrow Camp).

Maiden Castle and Maidenhold.

Drumburgh (? Drumbog = little ridge).

Muncaster (Meolcastre?)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brampton, if a Roman camp, is a more curious case. Here the church is half a mile west of the camp, and the camp one mile west of the town. At the east end of the town is an Anglian "burh" or moated-hill, shewing where that race made a settlement. In this case, however, there must have been originally two settlements a mile and a-half apart. The west one was just clear of the Roman camp in the usual way. For some reason, of which we have lost knowledge, the inhabitants of this were drawn to the east settlement, and the church remained alone.

<sup>2</sup> Carlisle (Celtic, *Caer*; Irish, *Ka-hiv*) is clear, and shows a post-Roman Celtic occupation. Carron, found elsewhere in the Lakes, like Cairn, is Celtic, but very likely a Viking importation from Man.

"Caster," in Muncaster, introduces a whole series of difficulties. Dr. Christison has shewn that the forms "caster," "chester," and the like, are frequently in Scotland applied to small non-Roman forts; and shews good reasons that in

that country these words were introduced by the Saxons, or (we may presume) the Angles. That though, in England, the Saxons applied them to towns of Roman origin, the Romans themselves did not call their towns by the name of "Castrum," nor did the Roman-Britons subsequent to the evacuation. Muncaster, therefore, as a Roman-British name is very doubtful.

Maiden Castle, Maiden Way, and Maiden Hold (a fort near Crackenthorpe), though very obscure, are almost certainly Celtic. "Den" is pretty certainly "dun," a hill or ridge, or, as in Wales, a fort. The first syllable has been the subject of innumerable suggestions and "shots," among which are Dr. Stuart's "mag," pronounced "mai," and "maes," a field or a battle. The word crops up again in the camp Mawbray or Mawburgh, where it is associated with a later non-Celtic word. And also in the parallel form of Mayborough, the great ring of cobbles near Penrith, and Maeshowe in Orkney.

And of these it may be noticed that Drumburgh and Muncaster may be Anglian; Caermot, which involves "mote" (already discussed), is a very doubtful form, while Carron is not improbably a loan word brought by the Norse at a later date from Man. We should also observe that only one of these (Carlisle) retains an urban population on its site, and there is an old but insignificant village at the questionable example of Drumburgh.

Again, as to local history of this period what have we? There is the story of King Cunedda and his realm, who was of Roman descent and ruled from Carlisle to Wearmouth some time after the Romans left. His title of Wledig is supposed to be the Welsh equivalent of the office of Dux Britanniarum, the general in command of the northern frontier garrison. But very little is certain.<sup>1</sup> There are the sixth century Welsh poems, which have been pronounced "too vague and obscure for the purposes of history,"<sup>2</sup> and there are the Arthurian legends, which are certainly no better. Besides, all that we can gather from these sources applies to general Welsh and Cumbrian history, and affords little or no purely local evidence.

There remains, however, one chronicler whose evidence, if we may trust it, is of the greatest importance to the questions we have been discussing. The Chronicle of Gildas was written about 546 A.D., or about 140 years after the Roman evacuation; and although it has been the fashion to treat his story as fabulous romance, it has been shewn by Skene that, read aright, it corroborates completely the evidence of Greek and Roman authorities, while it adds immeasurably to the detailed information, of the events of the period on the northern frontier.<sup>3</sup>

The story of Gildas, where we take it up, is the story of the Roman Wall from A.D. 383, in which year Maximus was proclaimed Emperor, and, having repressed the Picts and Scots, led away the garrison of Britain and "the flower of her youth" to Italy.<sup>4</sup> This was in 387.

<sup>1</sup> See Rhys, *Celtic Britain*, 102, 116, 117, and 135.

<sup>2</sup> Elton, *Origins of English History*, 361.

<sup>3</sup> Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, I, 112-113.

<sup>4</sup> This was not, of course, the first appearance of the Picts and Scots. They gave great trouble during the reigns of the heirs of Constantine the Great (337-350). Constans and Con-

Gildas, in Chapters 15 to 19, describes in melodramatic detail the tragic events which followed. No sooner had the garrison departed than Britain, "utterly ignorant as she was of the art of war, groaned in amazement for many years under the cruelty of two foreign nations—the Scots from the north-west, the Picts from the north-east."

This was the incursion of 396 A.D. Gildas tells us how the Britons sent an embassy to Rome with a piteous message asking for help. He describes how a legion, which we know from other sources was under Stilicho, was despatched, and how the enemy were dispersed with great slaughter. The Britons then built a wall under the tuition of the Romans, "which being of turf instead of stone was no use to that foolish people who had no head to guide them."<sup>1</sup>

The legion was then withdrawn (A.D. 402), and at once this action was followed by the return of the enemy "like ravening wolves rushing with greedy jaws upon the fold which is left without a shepherd."

Gildas describes the "strength of the oarsmen," shewing that some, at any rate, came by sea, and how they broke the boundaries and overran the whole country.

Again the Britons sent an embassy "with their garments rent, and their heads covered with ashes—like timorous chickens, crowding under the wings of their parents"; to which the Romans responded by sending "their unexpected bands of cavalry by land and mariners by sea," who again drove the enemy beyond the sea. This was the return of Stilicho in 405 with the full British army of three legions. Gildas then describes the final evacuation of the Romans (407), telling the Britons, among much other good advice, "that they should not suffer their hands to be tied behind their backs by a nation, which, unless they were enervated by idleness and sloth, was not more powerful than them-

stantius are both said to have despatched expeditions against them, but without any permanent result. More incursions followed in the time of Jovian (363-4), and in 368-9 they penetrated to the south coast, threatened London, and

were driven back by Valentinian's general, Theodosius, who cleared the country between the walls, which then received the name of Valentia.

<sup>1</sup> Supposed to be the Clyde-Forth wall.

selves." Patterns of arms were left with the "miserable natives," with whose help, and by subscriptions, another wall of ordinary construction was erected.<sup>1</sup>

Chapter 19 of Gildas is a vivid and picturesque account of the horrors that followed. The Picts and Scots, coming forth like "worms from their holes," land from the canoes which have transported them over the Cichican Valley.<sup>2</sup> He tells us how they fell upon the garrison, equally slow to fight and ill adapted to run away—"a panic-struck company,"—and dragged them with hooks from the wall; how they dispersed, abandoning both the cities and the wall itself, and how the enemy pursued and butchered them like sheep; and lastly how, driven by despair and want, they turned upon and massacred each other.<sup>3</sup>

There are many different suggestions as to the routes by which the enemy entered Britain. Gildas, as we have seen, more than once alludes to their arrival by water, and it may be accepted that they came both from Ireland and Scotland, landing on the West Cumbrian coast, and also crossing the Solway fords and the Wall itself. There is no evidence that the Roman ports mentioned at the beginning of this paper were maintained by the Romanized Britons, or even by the Anglians. No doubt the Irish contingent destroyed them, or, speaking more correctly, the camps protecting them, at the first onslaught after the Roman garrison had gone. The Anglians had no trade on this side of the country to necessitate reopening them.<sup>4</sup> Those invaders who came over the Solway may have occupied and maintained the camps at Bowness and Burgh

<sup>1</sup> The Solway-Tyne wall. "Erected" should no doubt read "repaired."

<sup>2</sup> Query: the Irish Sea or the Solway?

<sup>3</sup> The reader must refer to Skene for the excellent tabulation of Gildas and other authorities, which shows exactly how they tally. It leaves only one difficulty. Chapter 19 of Gildas, as we see above, describes the Pictish raids of 407 A.D. Chapter 20 immediately proceeds with the notorious message of shame, "the groans of the Britons," which was sent in the 3rd Consulate of Aetius in 446 A.D. Mr. Skene shews that this chapter, or perhaps the message only, is misplaced, and refers to the Saxon raids (which, according to Nennius, had begun in 374 A.D.) and not

to the Pictish troubles at all. (See Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, Vol. I, 104-7, 113, 145, 152.) Chapters 20-25 of Gildas are also of great interest, though they have not so much local bearing. Chapter 21 is a fearful indictment of the British character and the falseness and vice, both in the Church and laity, in the fifth century. Chapter 24 is important as describing an early Anglian raid across the country, till the western sea was reached, and a city, apparently in Cumbria, sacked and destroyed.

<sup>4</sup> Wright, in *The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon* (1861, p. 392) adduces archaeological evidence that camps in Cumberland, Lancashire, and Wales were thus destroyed.

to secure the Solway fords, and this may account for the continuity of population at these sites.

It was long the fashion to reject the Chronicle of Gildas as totally fanciful; apparently more because of the shame it casts on the name of Briton than for any sufficient reason. But Bede the venerable accepted it, and embodied the main points of the narrative; and it has remained for the author of *Celtic Scotland* in our day to replace it upon our shelves as a work which may not be neglected in the study of this obscure period.

The evidence of the sites and names we have gathered in this paper corroborates, we think in a great measure, the story of Gildas. Luxury, effeminacy, cowardice, and disease were no doubt the miserable heritage which the Romans left at their camps and towns. A race so degenerate had no chance with the hordes of wild, hard northern barbarians. They swarmed in over the Wall and over the Irish Sea, and the wretched Britons were almost exterminated. When the missionaries came—when the Angles came, it was a howling wilderness. Roman power had gone; British pluck had proved a will o' th' wisp; and such Britons as survived, cowered in the forests and bogs, or fled to inaccessible glens and moors as the newcomers appeared.<sup>1</sup> But that they survived as a race in our part of Cumbria with any culture, number, or organization, for any length of time after 409, all the evidence which is available seems to give little warrant for believing. No doubt one of the strongest arguments which can be brought in favour of an united and organized community in these parts in post-Roman times is the slow advance of the Anglians to the west and the length of time before they settled the plains. But in 573, or a hundred years before this date, the battle of Ardderyd removed the seat of Cumbrian power from Carlisle to Dumbarton; yet the Angles did not settle the land, rather, we would suggest, on account of the rugged and inhospitable character of the

<sup>1</sup> Skene (*Celtic Scotland*, p. 120, Vol. I) points out that the Roman rule "did not leave . . . a provincial people speaking the Roman language and preserving their laws and customs," and that though in the south the effects

were deep and lasting, the Britons in the north and west "were more in the position of native tribes under a foreign rule," and that withdrawal in these parts meant a reversion to their primitive methods.

country, than because any serious opposition was encountered or apprehended.

The blessings of civilization we often hear of; but the contact between civilization and barbarism is not always a boon. The ultimate effect of it in the Cumbrian Celt was the same which we may see to-day among the copper-coloured Americans (Indians) or the Aborigines of Australia. It requires either a very vigorous race like the negro, or a magnificent faith like that of the Moslem, to pass unscathed the ordeal.