



The earliest Welsh genealogies: textual layering and the phenomenon of ‘pedigree growth’

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This article examines the ways in which early medieval genealogical texts might be augmented over time in order to reflect changing political situations. Two early ninth-century tracts from the kingdoms of Powys and Dyfed in Wales are taken as case studies. Textual and chronological problems with the tracts are discussed, and contexts are proposed for the circumstances of their composition. It is suggested that each of these tracts stands at the head of a process of ‘pedigree growth’, whereby, during the course of textual transmission, the genealogical content of each tract was extended both backwards and forwards in time.

The centrality of kinship for the functioning of society and the exercise of power during the Middle Ages ensured that genealogy retained its place as a subject of literary endeavour throughout the period.¹ Over time, certain cultural regions and polities developed their own, generally introspective bodies of genealogical writing, which acquired particular sets of generic conventions and characteristics.² In Wales, most such early writings survive in later compilations of a somewhat antiquarian

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¹ For general surveys, see L. Genicot, *Les Généalogies*, Typologie des Sources du Moyen Âge Occidental 15 (Turnhout, 1975; supplement in 1985); D.N. Dumville, ‘Kingship, Genealogies, and Regnal Lists’, in P.H. Sawyer and I.N. Wood (eds), *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds, 1979), pp. 72–104.

² Most notably Ireland; see the important introductory essay by D. Ó Corráin, ‘Creating the Past: The Early Irish Genealogical Tradition’, *Peritia* 12 (1998), pp. 177–208. The indispensable introduction to the early English material remains K. Sisam, ‘Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953), pp. 287–348. See too the collection of Carolingian genealogical texts in G. Waitz, *[Supplementa tomorum I–XII, pars I]*, *MGH SS* 13 (Hanover, 1881), pp. 242–8.

nature. The three most important collections of Welsh secular genealogies are the collection in London, British Library, Harley 3859 (c.1100), the collection in Oxford, Jesus College 20 (c.1400), and the early thirteenth-century collection called here the ‘Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies’, extant in manuscripts from the fifteenth century onwards.³ The written materials from which these collections are formed are thoroughly interrelated, and corporately embody the products of the cumulative expansion, abbreviation, and re-edition of the Welsh written genealogical tradition over time. The conventions and methods of the scholars responsible for the writing, copying, and alteration of the genealogical texts evolved gradually, and some of these editorial developments may be observed in extant records. As early as the second half of the ninth century, when the collection underlying the Harleian genealogies was probably first created,⁴ the form favoured by Welsh scholars, like their Irish and English counterparts, was that of the pedigree, conceived, for the most part, as a ‘retrograde patriline’, a list of the (mostly) male direct ancestors of a given subject, traced back to some important founding figure.⁵ Such pedigrees, accompanied occasionally by explanatory notes, were written in a mixture of Latin and Welsh. When the pedigrees were later recopied, often in contexts that differed from the contexts in which they were first composed, they tended to be both brought forward in time, to the then-present day, and extended backwards into the ever remoter past, as part of the process termed here ‘pedigree growth’.⁶ Additions of both types were intended to account for contemporary political developments, the first factually, the second aetiologically.⁷ For this reason, pedigrees that had been in writing for a long time tended to become very lengthy indeed. The pedigree of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the last prince of

³ The three collections are accessible in P.C. Bartrum, *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts* (Cardiff, 1966), pp. 9–13, 42–50 and 75–120. Note that Bartrum arbitrarily divided the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies into four separate texts, grouped together under the heading “‘Hanesyn Hen” and Related Manuscripts’”. A new edition of the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies is in preparation.

⁴ B. Guy, ‘The Textual History of the Harleian Genealogies’, *Welsh History Review* 28 (2016), pp. 1–25, at p. 19; *idem*, ‘The Origins of the Compilation of Welsh Historical Texts in Harley 3859’, *Studia Celtica* 49 (2015), pp. 21–56, at p. 25; N.K. Chadwick, ‘Early Culture and Learning in North Wales’, in N.K. Chadwick (ed.), *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 29–120, at pp. 74–9.

⁵ D.E. Thornton, *Kings, Chronologies and Genealogies: Studies in the Political History of Early Medieval Ireland and Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 15. For Irish and English examples, see respectively M.A. O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae, vol. 1* (Dublin, 1976), pp. 10–17 and D.N. Dumville, ‘The Anglian Collection of Royal Genealogies and Regnal Lists’, *ASE* 5 (1976), pp. 23–50, at pp. 30–7.

⁶ Cf. D.E. Thornton, ‘Orality, Literacy and Genealogy in Early Medieval Ireland and Wales’, in H. Pryce (ed.), *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 83–98, at p. 89.

⁷ Cf. D. Ó Corráin, ‘Irish Origin-Legends and Genealogy: Recurrent Aetiologies’, in T. Nyberg, I. Pio, P.M. Sorensen and A. Trommer (eds), *History and Heroic Tale: A Symposium* (Odense, 1985), pp. 51–96.

Gwynedd (d. 1282), for example, as found in the fifteenth-century manuscript London, British Library, Harley 673, includes no fewer than ninety-four generations, inclusive of both Llywelyn and God.⁸ The same occurred elsewhere; Ailred of Rievaulx, drawing on a pedigree of the West Saxon kings that had been in writing since at least the ninth century, was able to trace the ancestry of Henry II back fifty-six generations to Adam.⁹

If genealogies were disposed to grow over time, it follows that earlier genealogical texts should generally be shorter in length. This is indeed exactly what we find with some of the earliest extant Welsh genealogical texts, embedded within the Harleian genealogical collection. The latter collection originated as an illustrative appendix to the ninth-century Cambro-Latin composition *Historia Brittonum*, and was probably composed sometime in the third quarter of the ninth century, possibly around 858.¹⁰ By the time the collection reached its extant form, in c.954, it had been interpolated with a number of smaller genealogical texts taken from other sources.¹¹ Since the latest stage of this interpolation happened in the church of St Davids, in south-west Wales, the interpolated form of the genealogical collection may be called the 'St Davids genealogical collection'. Two of the interpolated texts, which form the subjects of the present paper, concern the kingdoms of Powys and Dyfed in the early ninth century. I call the two texts the 'Powys tract' and the 'Dyfed tract'. These are two of the earliest genealogical texts that have survived from early medieval Wales, and they are probably indicative of the form once taken by the earliest stratum of Welsh genealogical records.

The two texts share a number of traits. For a start, both express relationships between individuals using Latin rather than Welsh terminology (e.g. Latin *filius* for Old Welsh *map*, 'son'). In this sense they sit oddly in the extant Harleian collection, much of which uses Welsh for this purpose.¹² They do not conform to the standard pedigree model. Neither text extends for more than five generations; instead, more information is given about collateral relatives than is usual in Welsh genealogical texts written before the thirteenth century.

⁸ Printed in D.E. Thornton, 'A Neglected Genealogy of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 23 (1992), pp. 9–23, at p. 21.

⁹ *Epistola abbatis Rievallensis Aelredi ad illustrem duces H.*, ed. J.P. Migne, *PL* 195 (1855), cols 711–38, at cols 716–17. Compare T.A. Bredehoft, *Textual Histories: Readings in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Toronto, 2001), pp. 33–5 and 182–3, nn. 70–1; Dumville, 'Anglian Collection', pp. 39–40.

¹⁰ Guy, 'Origins', p. 55.

¹¹ See Guy, 'Textual History'. For the date of the extant form of the text, see E. Phillimore, 'The *Annales Cambriae* and the Old-Welsh Genealogies from *Harleian MS.* 3859', *Y Cymmrodor* 9 (1888), pp. 141–83, at p. 144; Guy, 'Origins', p. 22.

¹² Ó Corráin observes that older genealogical texts in Ireland tend to use more Latin: 'Creating the Past', p. 193.

A longer pedigree of the expected sort probably did form part of the Dyfed tract originally, as we shall see, but this would not have extended back as many generations in the early ninth century as some of its derivative versions in later Welsh genealogical texts eventually came to do. In both cases, however, it is clear that the longer pedigrees that later came to be associated with the kingdoms of Powys and Dyfed were textual developments that grew out of more limited genealogical records of the kind represented by the two tracts.

The Powys tract

I begin with a few thoughts on the Powys tract, before turning to the more intricate questions prompted by the Dyfed tract. The Powys tract, written probably in the early ninth century, is the earliest dateable genealogical evidence for the dynasty of the kingdom of Powys, in north-east Wales. Despite the questions of interpretation that arise from certain textual problems, as are discussed below, the development of the Powys genealogies from the time of the Powys tract onwards shows clearly the ways in which genealogies could be adapted and altered with the coming of each new generation of rulers. Furthermore, the textual relationships existing between the successive genealogies suggest the complexities that could arise when new genealogists insisted on predicating their work on the texts of their predecessors, forcing them to come to terms with the legitimizing pseudo-historical fictions of past regimes.

The Powys tract, which now comprises sections 30 and 31 of the Harleian genealogies (i.e. HG 30–31), appears today as follows (the names in the translation are given in modern Welsh forms):¹³

- HG 30 [M]aun¹⁴ Artan Iouab Meic filii Grippi filii Elized.
 HG 31 [E]lized Ioab Ædan filii Cincen filii Brocmail filii Elized.
- HG 30 Mawn, Arthan, Ieuaf, Maig, sons of Gr[???] son of Elise.
 HG 31 Elise, Ieuaf, Aeddau, sons of Cyngen son of Brochfael son of Elise.

As the text stands, two lines of descent are given, one of three and one of four generations, bound together by a common ancestor, *Elized* (modern Welsh 'Elise'), in the fourth generation. The link with the kingdom of Powys is not made explicit in the text, but may be adduced through a comparison with the well-known Pillar of Eliseg. This monument was erected near present-day Llangollen in north-east Wales, probably in

¹³ Text from Phillimore's edition: *Annales Cambriæ*, p. 182.

¹⁴ The initial letter of the first name in each genealogy is omitted in the manuscript but is supplied here in square brackets. See Guy, 'Origins', pp. 23–4.

the first half of the ninth century, by Cyngen, king of Powys (d. 854). Its inscription, now no longer legible but surviving in early modern transcripts, opens with a short genealogical statement:¹⁵

CONCENN FILIUS CATTELL CATTELL FILIUS BROHCGMAIL
BROHCGMAIL FILIUS ELISEG¹⁶ ELISEG FILIUS GOULLAUC

Cyngen son of Cadell, Cadell son of Brochfael, Brochfael son of Elise, Elise son of Gwylog

The inscription then goes on to explain that King Cyngen had ordered the monument to be erected for his great-grandfather Elise, who ‘necxit hereditatem Pouos’ (‘united the inheritance of Powys’). Here, as in the Powys tract, a certain Elise is cast in the role of dynastic progenitor. Although Elise and his son Brochfael are the only figures shared by the Powys tract and the inscription, Elise’s consistent role in the two texts helps to substantiate the connection between the lineages of the Powys tract and the kingdom of Powys.

Later in the inscription, the remoter ancestral figures Brydw, Vortigern, and Severa are mentioned, who provide links to the sources of legitimacy represented by Magnus Maximus and St Germanus.¹⁷ Although some sections of the inscription were no longer legible to the seventeenth-century antiquarians whose transcripts we rely upon for our text, it is not necessary to assume that the inscription ever included a specific agnatic line of descent from Gwylog back to Brydw, especially considering the lack of space on the monument.¹⁸ One may

¹⁵ M. Redknapp, J.M. Lewis and N. Edwards (eds), *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stone Sculpture in Wales*, 3 vols (2007–13), III, pp. 325–6; N. Edwards, ‘Rethinking the Pillar of Eliseg’, *The Antiquaries Journal* 89 (2009), pp. 143–77, at pp. 171–3.

¹⁶ The final *g* of the spelling *Eliseg* is either a misreading of Insular *t* (for *lðl*) (Phillimore ‘*Annales Cambriae*’, p. 181, n. 2) or possibly part of a hypercorrect spelling *-eg* for final *-e(:)l* (P. Sims-Williams, ‘The Emergence of Old Welsh, Cornish and Breton Orthography, 600–800: The Evidence of Archaic Old Welsh’, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* [hereafter *BBCS*] 38 (1991), pp. 20–86, at pp. 50–1; *idem* in Redknapp, Lewis and Edwards, *Corpus*, III, p. 333).

¹⁷ D.N. Dumville, ‘Sub-Roman Britain: History and Legend’, *History* 62 (1977), pp. 173–92, at pp. 179–80 and 186.

¹⁸ P. Sims-Williams, ‘H. M. Chadwick and Early Wales’, in M. Lapidge (ed.), *H. M. Chadwick and the Study of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic in Cambridge*, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 69/70 (2015), pp. 171–82, at pp. 180–1; *idem*, ‘Powys and Early Welsh Poetry’, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 67 (2014), pp. 33–54, at pp. 37–8; T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350–1064* (Oxford, 2013), p. 451; J.D. Bu’lock, ‘Vortigern and the Pillar of Eliseg’, *Antiquity* 34 (1960), pp. 49–53, at p. 51; cf. Edwards, ‘Rethinking’, p. 165; J. Rhys, ‘All around the Wrekin’, *Y Cymmador* 21 (1908), pp. 1–62, at pp. 43–5. David Kirby’s uncritical reconstruction of the pedigree must be rejected: D.P. Kirby, ‘British Dynastic History in the Pre-Viking Period’, *BBCS* 27 (1978), pp. 81–114, at pp. 106–7; O.W. Jones, ‘*Hereditas Pouois*: The Pillar of Eliseg and the History of Early Powys’, *Welsh History Review* 24 (2009), pp. 41–80, at pp. 49–50.

note Molly Miller's observation that the Britto/Brutus of the *Historia Brittonum* did not need to be genealogically linked to any specific descendants in order to fulfil his aetiological function.¹⁹ Perhaps the Pillar of Eliseg's Brydw (*Britu*) once similarly functioned as an eponym for the Britons of Powys, affiliated in an unspecific way to Cyngen's dynasty.²⁰

The form of the name *Grippi* in the Powys tract suggests that some kind of textual error has been made at this point. The form should either be *Grip(p)ri* (modern Welsh 'Griffri'), perhaps with an Insular long *r* having been misread as a *p*, or *Grippiud* (modern Welsh 'Gruffudd'), with two letters having been omitted from the end of the word.²¹ Egerton Phillimore suggested that this *Grippi* should be identified with a certain Gruffudd who appears in the Welsh Latin 'Harleian chronicle', in the annal for 815:²²

Gripiud filius Cincen dolosa dispensatione a fratre suo Elized post interuallum duorum mensium interficitur.

After a space of two months Gruffudd son of Cyngen is killed by his brother Elise through deceitful planning.

It is possible that the Elise son of Cyngen in this annal should be equated with the Elise son of Cyngen in the second line of the Powys tract. The names Elise and Cyngen are, in this period, characteristic of Powysian dynasts.²³ In view of the textual error implied by the form *Grippi* in the first line of the Powys tract, it is also possible, as Phillimore suggested, that *Grippi* can be identified with the annal's *Gripiud*, implying that the Powys tract has omitted the names of *Grippi*'s father Cyngen and grandfather Brochfael, in addition to the end of *Grippi*'s name. This identification is speculative but plausible, and would explain the absence of a brother of Elise called Gruffudd in the second line, since he had already been mentioned in the first line.

¹⁹ M. Miller, 'Forms and Uses of Pedigrees', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1977), pp. 195–206, at pp. 197–8.

²⁰ The names *Pascen* and *Mau[n]* in the line above *Britu* cannot have been part of a pedigree, because there is no space between them for the word *filius*.

²¹ Cf. P. Sims-Williams, 'Historical Need and Literary Narrative: A Caveat from Ninth-Century Wales', *Welsh History Review* 17 (1994), pp. 1–40, at pp. 36–7.

²² Phillimore, 'Annales Cambriae', p. 182, n. 2; *Annales Cambriae, A.D. 682–954: Texts A–C in Parallel*, ed. D.N. Dumville (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 8–9.

²³ D.E. Thornton, 'Predatory Nomenclature and Dynastic Expansion in Early Medieval Wales', *Medieval Prosopography* 20 (1999), pp. 1–22, at pp. 7 and 12; Sims-Williams, 'Historical Need', p. 16, n. 55; D.N. Dumville, 'Late-Seventh- or Eighth-Century Evidence for the British Transmission of Pelagius', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 10 (1985), pp. 39–52, at pp. 49–52.

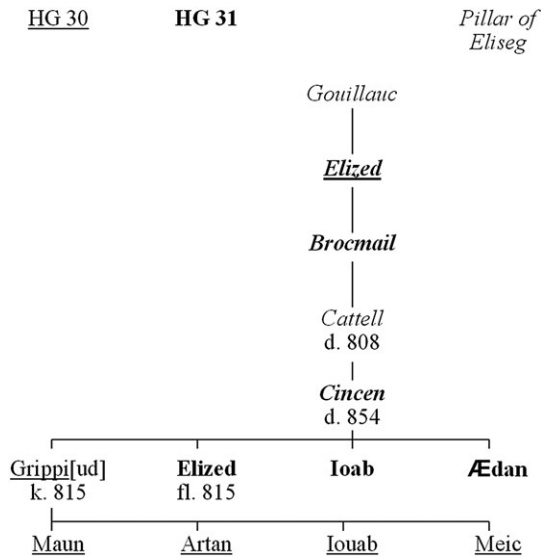


Fig. 1 Phillimore's emendation of the Powys tract

Phillimore, however, went one stage further, suggesting that Cyngen, the father of Elise and Gruffudd in the annal, was the Cyngen, king of Powys, who erected the Pillar of Eliseg.²⁴ Such an identification requires the insertion of *filiu Catel* after *Cincen* into the second line of the Powys tract, as well as the insertion of a longer passage, *-ud filii Cincen filii Catel filii Brocmail*, following the problematic *Grippi* in the first line. Phillimore's emendations of the text, which have been accepted by many subsequent scholars,²⁵ produce the scheme in Fig. 1 (note that in Figs 1–3, names in HG 30 are underlined, names in HG 31 are in bold and names on the Pillar of Eliseg are italicized).

There are a number of problems with Phillimore's reconstruction, not the least of which is chronology.²⁶ Cyngen, king of Powys, died in 854, forty-six years after the death of his father Cadell in 808, and yet, according to this scheme, he had two politically active adult sons already in 815.²⁷ Instead, I suggest that one of the two following solutions presents a sounder result:

²⁴ Phillimore, *Annales Cambriae*, p. 182, n. 3.

²⁵ J.E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest*, 2 vols, 3rd edn (London, 1939), I, p. 325, n. 18; Bartrum, *Tracts*, pp. 12 and 129, n. 30; D.E. Thornton, 'Power, Politics and Status: Aspects of Genealogy in Medieval Ireland and Wales', Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge (1991), pp. 68–70.

²⁶ Thornton, 'Power, Politics and Status', p. 68.

²⁷ *Annales Cambriae*, ed. Dumville, pp. 8–9 and 12–13.

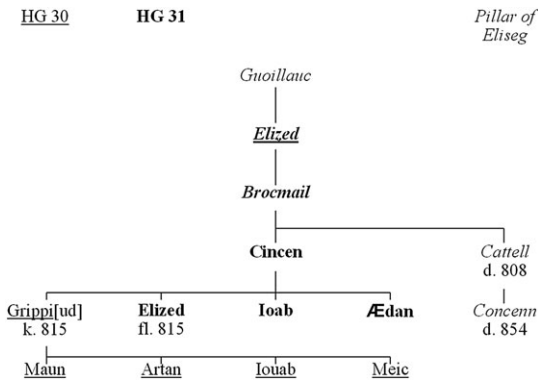


Fig. 2 An alternative emendation of the Powys tract

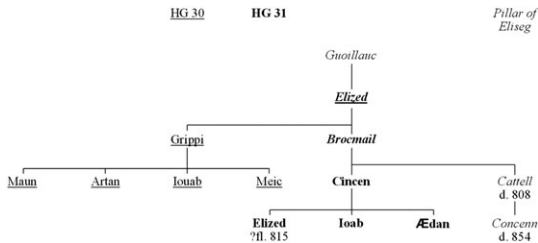


Fig. 3 The Powys tract without emendation

- i) Phillimore was correct to identify the [E]lized filius Cincen and the Grippi of the Powys tract with the Elise and Gruffudd, sons of Cyngen, in the annal for 815, though incorrect to identify this Cyngen with the Cyngen of the Pillar of Eliseg. This would entail the emendation of the first line of the Powys tract through the insertion of *-ud filii Cincen filii Brocmail* following the name *Grippi* (Fig. 2).
- ii) Phillimore was incorrect to identify *Grippi* with the Gruffudd ap Cyngen of the annal for 815, meaning that no substantial emendation of the Powys tract is required, as Patrick Sims-Williams has suggested (Fig. 3).²⁸ Phillimore's identification of the [E]lized filius Cincen of the Powys tract with the man of the same name in the annal for 815 may nevertheless be correct, and Gruffudd may have been omitted from the list of Elise ap Cyngen's brothers in HG 31 either because Elise had already killed him²⁹ or for some other reason, such as the two having been born from different mothers.

²⁸ Sims-Williams, 'Historical Need', pp. 36–8.

²⁹ This was Phillimore's explanation: '*Annales Cambriæ*', p. 182, n. 2. Sims-Williams thought the suggestion 'rather contrived' ('Historical Need', p. 37), but it seems to me that fratricide would have been a genuine problem for those wishing to describe the relations of those in power.

The important point in the present context is that neither the Cyngen of the Pillar of Eliseg (d. 854) nor his father Cadell (d. 808; possible brother of the *Cincen* of HG 31) appear in either reading. This may be because Cyngen ap Cadell's pedigree is found elsewhere in the Harleian collection, but it may equally be because there was a period (represented by the 815 annal) in the generation preceding Cyngen's kingship of Powys in which his branch of the family was not paramount, and others instead warranted inclusion in the genealogical record. This illustrates the limits of our knowledge of Welsh dynastic politics in the early Middle Ages, and emphasizes the dangers of reading long, linear pedigrees as simple king lists.

The Powys tract was presumably written in a monastic house in Powys favourable to Elise's dynasty. Since the Pillar of Eliseg advertises a connection between this dynasty and St Germanus, known in Welsh as St Garmon, it may be suggested that the monastic house responsible for the Powys tract was located in Llanarmon-yn-Iâl ('the church enclosure of St Garmon in Iâl'), near the Pillar of Eliseg. It is notable in this respect that a certain Llanarmon, most probably Llanarmon-yn-Iâl, is singled out as one of the *praecipuae ecclesiae* of north Wales to which Gruffudd ap Cynan, a later ruler of Gwynedd, donated money on his deathbed in 1137, as reported in his twelfth-century *vita*.³⁰

The lack of any long ancestry for the dynastic founder Elise in the Powys tract may be indicative of the text's early date (compare the lack of any explicit long pedigree for Elise on the Pillar of Eliseg). Just such an ancestry was later given to Cyngen, Elise's great-grandson, as may be found in §27 of the Harleian genealogies, where his line is traced back through Elise to a certain Cadell. It seems probable that this pedigree was included in the source of the Harleian genealogies in order to illustrate the claim made in the *Historia Brittonum* that Powys was governed by the descendants of Cadell Ddyrnllug 'usque in hodiernum diem' ('to this day').³¹ As has been noticed and discussed many times before, the *Historia Brittonum*'s account of the dynastic origins of the kingdom of Powys seems to be at variance with the account on the Pillar of Eliseg; the *Historia Brittonum* states that the kings of Powys were all descended from Cadell, who was blessed by Germanus, whereas the extant text of the Pillar of Eliseg makes no reference to Cadell but mentions Vortigern, whose son Brydwr was, again, blessed by

³⁰ *Vita Griffini filii Conani*, §34, ed. P. Russell (Cardiff, 2005), pp. 88–9; Lloyd, *History*, I, p. 245, n. 88.

³¹ *Historia Brittonum* [= HB], §35, ed. E. Faral, *La légende arthurienne: études et documents*, 3 vols (Paris, 1929), III, p. 27; Guy, 'Textual History', p. 21.

Germanus.³² Patrick Sims-Williams has argued that the parts of the Pillar's inscription that were illegible to the seventeenth-century transcribers may have introduced Vortigern in some way that did not conflict with the account in the *Historia Brittonum*;³³ however, it seems difficult to imagine that the Pillar would have claimed that Vortigern's son Brydhw had been blessed by St Germanus and was the grandson of Maximus had there been no implication that Cyngen's dynasty was connected with Brydhw, regardless of the question of whether or not the inscription ever included a specific pedigree demonstrating this.³⁴

I would agree with those who have argued that the contrast between the two texts was somehow a consequence of the dynasty of Elise ap Gwylog having wrested some power in Powys away from the Cadelling dynasty.³⁵ The *Historia Brittonum*'s hagiographical account about St Germanus establishing Cadell and his heirs as the eternal rulers of all Powys would, according to this view, be at least partially anachronistic by the first half of the ninth century, when the Pillar of Eliseg was erected. The *Historia Brittonum*'s source for its Germanus material was apparently a saint's Life, named at one point as the *Liber beati Germani*; perhaps this lost Life was composed before the rise of the dynasty of Elise ap Gwylog.³⁶

The difference between the Pillar of Eliseg and the *Historia Brittonum* might also be a product of the way in which the *Liber beati Germani* was composed. As has been said, the location of the Pillar of Eliseg suggests that its reference to St Germanus was prompted by the proximity of the church of Llanarmon-yn-Iâl. Traditions from the same church were almost certainly responsible for the Cadell story in the *Historia Brittonum*, via the *Liber beati Germani*.³⁷ However, it is possible that the *Liber beati Germani* was also the source for a further genealogy embedded within the *Historia Brittonum*, one which appears immediately after the account of the interaction between Germanus and Vortigern. This genealogy is traced back to Vortigern, but it does not begin with a member of the dynasty of Elise ap Gwylog; rather, it begins with a certain Ffernfael, 'qui regit modo in regionibus duabus Buelt et Guorthigirniau' ('who rules now in the two regions of Buelt

³² For discussion, see Charles-Edwards, *Wales*, pp. 447–52; N. Tolstoy, 'Cadell and the Cadelling of Powys', *Studia Celtica* 46 (2012), pp. 59–83; Jones, 'Hereditas Pouoisi', pp. 47–51; Kirby, 'British Dynastic History', pp. 101–9; Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain', pp. 185–7.

³³ Sims-Williams, 'Powys', pp. 37–8; *idem*, 'H. M. Chadwick', pp. 180–1.

³⁴ Cf. Bu'lock, 'Vortigern', p. 51.

³⁵ Kirby, 'British Dynastic History', pp. 106–8; Jones, 'Hereditas Pouoisi', p. 49.

³⁶ *HB*, §47, ed. Faral, *La légende*, III, p. 35; Jones, 'Hereditas Pouoisi', pp. 50–1.

³⁷ Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain', p. 186; Charles-Edwards, *Wales*, p. 451.

and Gwerthryniön').³⁸ The text locates the descendants of Vortigern in mid-Wales, rather than near Llanarmon-yn-Iâl in the north east, as the Pillar of Eliseg implies. This account may derive from the church of St Harmon ('Llanarmon' in Welsh), another important church of St Germanus, but one located within the bounds of Gwerthryniön.³⁹ This is supported by R.W.D. Fenn's argument that Germanus's forty-day stay in Gwerthryniön during his pursuit of Vortigern in the *Historia Brittonum* was intended to allude to the foundation of the church of St Harmon.⁴⁰ The *Liber beati Germani* thus incorporated traditions from more than one church of Germanus, meaning that it is not at all certain whether it was composed from the specific perspective of the church of Llanarmon-yn-Iâl, as probably was the nearby Pillar of Eliseg. Perhaps this accounts for the differing portrayals of the origins of the kings of Powys in the *Historia Brittonum* and the Pillar of Eliseg.

The long pedigree tracing Cyngen back to Cadell Ddyrnllug had not necessarily been created by the time that Cyngen's father, Cadell, received his name;⁴¹ David Thornton has noted the process whereby intrusive dynasties appropriated the names of their vanquished dynastic rivals, without necessarily claiming direct agnatic descent from their rivals' dynastic ancestors.⁴² The long pedigree found in HG 27 probably reached its extant form during its transmission as part of a genealogical appendix that sought to explain and clarify the *Historia Brittonum*. Redactors of the appendix had to reconcile the statement that Powys was ruled by the descendants of Cadell with the reality of the contemporary dynasty of Elise ap Gwylog. A pedigree of Cyngen identical to that on the Pillar of Eliseg seems to have been available as a basis, and at some point this was extended backwards using a Cadelling pedigree similar to that of the Cadelling king Selyf (d. c.615)⁴³ found among the interpolated north-eastern material in the Harleian genealogies (§22).⁴⁴ It is notable that the Cadelling portion of Cyngen's 'pedigree' ends with *Selemiaun*; perhaps this word (meaning 'people/descendants/territory of Selyf') was once a description of the

³⁸ *HB*, §49, ed. Faral, *La légende*, III, p. 35; cf. M. Miller, 'Date-Guessing and Dyfed', *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/8), pp. 33–61, at pp. 51–2.

³⁹ The church is called *ecclesia sancti Germani* by Gerald of Wales: *Itinerarium Cambriae* I.1, ed. J. F. Dimock, *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera. Vol. 6: Itinerarium Cambriae et Descriptio Cambriae* (London, 1868), p. 17; trans. L. Thorpe, *Gerald of Wales: The Journey through Wales and The Description of Wales* (Harmondsworth, 1978), p. 78.

⁴⁰ *HB*, §47, ed. Faral, *La légende*, III, p. 34; R.W.D. Fenn, 'Who was St. Harmon?', *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society* 36 (1966), pp. 50–5, at pp. 50 and 53.

⁴¹ Cf. Sims-Williams, 'Powys', p. 36.

⁴² Thornton, 'Predatory Nomenclature'.

⁴³ Harleian Chronicle, *ann.* 160+10 [613], ed. Phillimore, '*Annales Cambriae*', p. 156; Charles-Edwards, *Wales*, pp. 388–9.

⁴⁴ Cf. Guy, 'Textual History', p. 10.

Cadelling portion of the pedigree, which became attached to Cyngen's pedigree through the erroneous insertion of an additional *map*.⁴⁵ The resultant construction was the following (Harleian genealogies, §27):

[C]incen map Catel map Brocmayl map Elitet map Guilauc map Eli map Eliud map Cincen map Brocmail map Cinan map Maucant map Pascent map Cattegir [*sic*] map Catel map Selemiaun.

Cyngen son of Cadell son of Brochfael son of Elise son of Gwylog son of Eli son of Eludd son of Cyngen son of Brochfael son of Cynan son of Mawgan son of Pasgen son of Cadeyrn son of Cadell son of Selyfion.

The point at which Cyngen's own pedigree seems to have been joined to the Cadelling pedigree is marked by the biblical name *Eli*, which is known to have been used among the Britons elsewhere.⁴⁶ Later versions of the pedigree name the same figure as *Beli*, though this might be because 'ap Eli' was, in Welsh, homophonous with 'ap Beli'.⁴⁷ In the present context, the consecutive alliterating names *Eli* and *Eliud* might be a pair of filler names, inserted to join together two originally separate pedigrees, since in HG 22 Selyf occupies the same genealogical position as *Eliud*. The same phenomenon may be observed in the invented sections of many other Welsh pedigrees; compare, for instance, the pairs of names (such as Nyfed and Dyfed) in the Dyfed pedigree discussed below.⁴⁸

As has been observed before, other genealogists would try to reconcile this artificial Cadelling pedigree with Cyngen's own proclaimed connection with Vortigern, creating, as a consequence, ever longer pedigrees.⁴⁹ This is a clear example of the process of 'pedigree growth' outlined at the beginning of this paper. At the head of the process stands a text like that preserved as the Powys tract in the Harleian genealogies, which records, no doubt accurately, a genealogy extending over no more than four or five generations. Over time, successive attempts to alter and expand the dynasty's genealogical record led to the growth of the 'Powys pedigree', which began to assume a textual existence of its own. One can witness the same process in more detail

⁴⁵ Phillimore, *Annales Cambriae*, p. 181, n. 5.

⁴⁶ J.R. Davies, 'Old Testament Personal Names among the Britons: Their Occurrence and Significance before the Twelfth Century', *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 43 (2012), pp. 175–92, at pp. 178, 180, and 190–2.

⁴⁷ Bartrum, *Tracts*, pp. 20 (JC 18) and 100 (ABT 6k).

⁴⁸ My thanks to the anonymous reviewers for useful suggestions regarding these names.

⁴⁹ Charles-Edwards, *Wales*, pp. 449–51; Tolstoy, 'Cadell', pp. 81–2; Jones, '*Hereditas Powoisi*', p. 48; Dumville, 'Sub-Roman Britain', p. 185, n. 61.

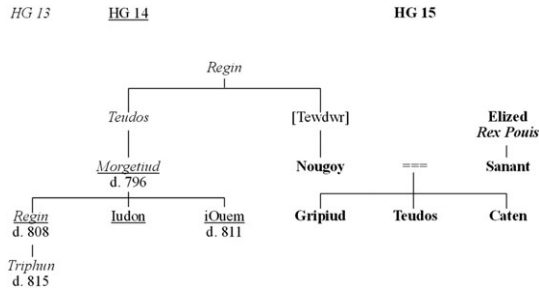


Fig. 4 The Dyfed tract

in the genealogical records of the kingdom of Dyfed, in south-west Wales, to which we now turn.

The Dyfed tract

The Dyfed tract provides a comparable example of an early ninth-century text standing at the head of a long process of pedigree growth. The text survives as sections 13–15 of the Harleian genealogies, as follows:

- HG 13 [T]riphun map Regin map Morgetiud map Teudos map Regin.
 HG 14 [R]egin Iudon iOuem tres filii Morgetiud sunt.
 HG 15 [G]ripiud Teudos Caten tres sunt filii Nougoy et Sanant
 Elized filia illorum mater erat regis Powis.

- HG 13 Tryffin son of Rhain son of Maredudd son of Tewdos son of Rhain.
 HG 14 Rhain, Iddon, Owain; they are the three sons of Maredudd.
 HG 15 Gruffudd, Tewdos, Cathen; they are the three sons of Nowy, and their mother was Sanan, daughter of Elise, king of Powys.

Like the Powys tract, the Dyfed tract covers no more than five generations of a single family (Fig. 4; names in HG 13 are italicized, names in HG 14 are underlined and names in HG 15 are in bold). Again, instead of a long patriline, more information is given about collateral relatives. The text focuses mostly on the great-grandsons of Rhain; the exception is Tryffin, the subject of HG 13, who is the only member of the following generation mentioned. This may imply that the Dyfed tract was composed during a period in which Tryffin was influential, perhaps in the years immediately prior to his death in 815.⁵⁰ Both Tryffin's father Rhain and his grandfather Maredudd are called

⁵⁰ Cf. Thornton, 'Power, Politics and Status', p. 79.

‘rex Demetorum’, ‘king of the *Demeti*’ (in south-west Wales) in their respective obituaries, though the annals accord no comparable title to Tryffin.⁵¹

The relationship between the first two parts of the Dyfed tract (HG 13–14) and the third part (HG 15) is not as clear as it might be, owing to the absence of Tewdwr, the father of Nowy, from the text of the latter. The relationship is, however, made explicit in a second version of the Dyfed tract, preserved in the Jesus 20 genealogies (JC 8). The versions of the Dyfed tract in the Harleian genealogies and the Jesus 20 genealogies derive ultimately from a common exemplar, as shown by the different ways in which a gloss on that common exemplar came to be incorporated into their texts. David Dumville has demonstrated that the words *regis Pouis* in HG 15 originated as a gloss on *Elized*, which was later copied somewhat confusingly at the end of the text.⁵² This *Elized* is probably the same *rex Pouis* who appears in both the Powys tract and in the Pillar of Eliseg as the founder of Cyngen’s dynasty. In JC 8 the same gloss, translated into Welsh as *vrenhin Powys*, has been incorporated inappropriately into the main text in a different way, displacing the name Nowy entirely and causing the phrase *Elisse verch* to be duplicated in error (both are underlined):⁵³

JC 8 Tewdwr m. Griffri m. Elisse m. Thewdwr m. Gruffud. Gruffud
a Thewdos a Cathen meibyon y vrenhin Powys o Sanant verch
Elisse y mam. Elisse verch Neuue Hen mab Tewdwr m. Rein m.
Cadwgawn m. Caden m. Keindrec merch Ruallawn m. Idwallawn m.
Llowarch m. Rigeneu m. Rein Dremrud m. Brachan.

JC 8 Tewdwr son of Griffri son of Elise son of Tewdwr son of Gruffudd.
Gruffudd and Tewdos and Cathen, sons of a king of Powys by
Sanan daughter of Elise, their mother. Elise daughter of
Nowy Hen son of Tewdwr son of Rhain son of Cadwgon son of
Cathen son of Ceinddrech daughter of Rhiwallon son of Idwallon
son of Llywarch son of Rhigenau son of Rhain Dremrudd son of
Brychan.

JC 8 includes the patrilineal ancestry of Nowy, whose father, we are explicitly told, was one *Tewdwr*, son of *Rein*. It is likely that some, though not all, of JC 8’s patrilineal pedigree appeared in the common source of HG 15 and JC 8.

⁵¹ *Annales Cambriae*, ed. Dumville, pp. 8–9.

⁵² Dumville, ‘British Transmission’, pp. 48–9, superseding P.C. Bartrum, ‘Noë, King of Powys’, *Y Cymmrodor* 43 (1932), pp. 53–61.

⁵³ Text from Bartrum, *Tracts*, p. 45.

JC 8 provides a good example of pedigree growth, both in the chronologically more recent and in the chronologically remoter parts of its text. The beginning of the text has been extended forwards by four generations, from Gruffudd ap Nowy, one of the three brothers in HG 15, to Tewdwr ap Griffri, a member of a family that ruled in Brycheiniog, in south-central Wales, in the mid-tenth century.⁵⁴ There was also a need to alter the earlier generations of the dynasty due to Tewdwr's family having become rulers of Brycheiniog rather than Dyfed. For this reason, Tewdwr's distant ancestor, *Caden*, is made to be the son of one Ceindrech, daughter of Rhiwallon, whose own patriline is conveniently traced to Brychan, the eponymous founder of Brycheiniog. The link was almost certainly contrived.

Nevertheless, the section of JC 8's pedigree in which the male ancestors of Nowy are traced back four generations further than in HG 15 may well have appeared in the ultimate source in the early ninth century. The inclusion of at least Nowy's father Tewdwr and grandfather Rhain would have made the connection between HG 15 and HG 13–14 explicit, just as the connection between the two parts of the Powys tract is made explicit through the inclusion of the common ancestor Elise. Remarkably, we can be certain that just such a pedigree, as partially found in JC 8, once existed independently. A pedigree traced back from a certain *Tualodor*, who is to be identified with either Tewdwr or his brother Tewdos, is found in the Old Irish tale *Indarba na nDéisi*, 'The Expulsion of the Déisi', which has consequently been dated to the brothers' lifetime, in the middle of the eighth century.⁵⁵ The pedigree is found only in the 'earlier' version of the tale, extant in four manuscripts.⁵⁶ Some of the name forms in this pedigree imply that it was taken from an Old Welsh source.⁵⁷ Since the extant form of JC 8 suggests that the source that it shares with HG 13–15 included at least the first five generations of this pedigree, it is not at all unlikely that their common source included a longer pedigree similar to that found in *Indarba na nDéisi*. The question is why no such pedigree exists in HG 13–15. The answer seems to be that the pedigree had

⁵⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Wales*, p. 548, n. 63; Dumville, 'British Transmission', p. 44, n. 26; Lloyd, *History*, I, pp. 336 and 353.

⁵⁵ T. Ó Cathasaigh, 'The Déisi and Dyfed', *Éigse* 20 (1984), pp. 1–33, at p. 21.

⁵⁶ K. Meyer, 'The Expulsion of the Dessi', *Y Cymmrodor* 14 (1901), pp. 101–35, at pp. 112–13; *idem*, 'The Expulsion of the Déssi', *Ériu* 3 (1907), pp. 135–42, at p. 136; S. Pender, 'Two Unpublished Versions of the Expulsion of the Déssi', in S. Pender (ed.), *Féilscribhinn Torna* (Cork, 1947), pp. 209–17, at pp. 213 and 217.

⁵⁷ E. Phillimore in H. Owen (ed.), *The Description of Penbrokeshire [sic] by George Owen of Henllys, Lord of Kemes*, 2 vols in 4 parts (London, 1892–1936), II.i, pp. 266–7, n. 1; N.K. Chadwick, 'Intellectual Life in West Wales in the Last Days of the Celtic Church', in Chadwick (ed.), *Studies*, pp. 121–82, at p. 122, n. 2; Ó Cathasaigh, 'Déisi', p. 21.

already been included elsewhere in the St Davids genealogical collection. At the same time that HG 13–15 was interpolated into the St Davids collection in the mid-tenth century, a pedigree was inserted into second position in the collection (now HG 2) which traced the Demetian ancestry of Helen, mother of Owain ap Hywel Dda, the king ruling south-west Wales (950–88) at the time of the interpolation.⁵⁸ The Demetian pedigree of HG 2 runs largely parallel to the pedigree in *Indarba na nDéisi*. In another example of pedigree growth, the differences are found at the beginning and the end. In the first part of HG 2, Helen's ancestry is traced back to Tewdos ap Rhain, who appears in the Dyfed tract in HG 13. In the latter reaches of the pedigree, other changes have been made that are best discussed only once all the extant versions of the pedigree have been laid out in parallel, as is done in Table 1. The table has been arranged so as to show the correspondences across the columns; a gap in a particular row does not indicate that there is a gap in that particular text, only that there is no name in that position corresponding to the other names in that row.

The Dyfed pedigree

The four versions of the Dyfed pedigree have been discussed in relation to one another before, not least because of the great variation that they display in their earlier reaches.⁵⁹ What is less often asked is why they should be almost perfectly consistent as far back as Tryffin (fl. s. v/vi?). The eleven generations back from the brothers Tewdwr and Tewdos to Tryffin appear almost without variation; the only differences of note are the (probably accidental) omission of Rhain and the insertion of Erbin, found in both the thirteenth-century Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies and in Jesus 20 genealogies, §§12–13. By contrast, beyond Tryffin there are dramatic differences in the selection and arrangement of the generations in each version. Some independent check seems to have prevented the generations between Tewdwr/Tewdos and Tryffin from being drastically changed or manipulated.

A cause for the unusual consistency may have been the one-time existence of an archive of early medieval documents in the monastery of

⁵⁸ Guy, 'Textual History', p. 20.

⁵⁹ Thornton, 'Power, Politics and Status', pp. 79–93; Miller, 'Date-Guessing and Dyfed'; K.D. Pringle, 'The Kings of Demetia', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1970–1), pp. 70–6 and 140–4; J.W. James, 'The Harleian Ms. 3859 Genealogy II: The Kings of Dyfed down to Arthur map Petr, died c. 586', *BBCS* 23 (1969), pp. 143–52; Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.i, pp. 277–8, n. 1; J. Rhŷs, 'The Irish Invasions of Wales and Dumnonia', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 5th ser. 9 (1892), pp. 56–73, at pp. 63–6.

Table 1 The pedigree of the kings of Dyfed

<i>Indarba na nDéisi</i> (Rawl. B. 502)*	Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, §38.1	HG 2	JC 12–13
	Iwein	[O]uein	Morgant
	Elen	[H]elen	Eweint
	Llywarch	Ioumarc	Hoel
	Hyfeid	Himeyt	Rees
	Tangwystyl	Tancoyslt	Arthuael
	Ewein	Ouein	Ceingar
	Maredud	Margetiut	Maredud
Tualodor	Teudos	Teudos	Teudos
Rígin		Regin	
Catacuind	Cadwgawn Trydelic	Catgocaun	Gwgawn
Caittienn	Kathen	Cathen	Cathen
Clotenn	Gwlyddien	Cloten	Eleothen
Nāe	Nowy	Nougoy	Nennue
Artuir	Arthur	Arthur	Arthur
Retheoir	Pedyr	Petr	Peder
Congair	Kyngar	Cincar	Kyngar
Gartbuir	Gwerthefyr	Gourtepir	Gwrdeber
	Erbin		Erbin
Alchoil	Aergul ap Llawir	Aircol	Aircol Lawhir
Trestin	Tryffin	Triphun	Tryphun
Aeda Brosc	Ewein Vreig		Ewein Vreisc
	Kyndeyrn Vendigeit		Cyndwr Bendigeit
	Ewein		Ewein
	Kyngar		Kyngar
			Prwtech
			Ewein
Corath	Ewein		
	Gwledyr [†]	Clotri	
	Gletwin	Gloitguin	
	Nyfed	Nimet	
	Dyvet	Dimet	
		Maxim Gulecic	
		Protec	
		Protector	
Echach Almuir	Ebynt	Ebiud	
	Elynt	Eliud	
Arttchuirp			
	Amloyd [‡]		
	Amweryd		

Table 1 (Continued)

<i>Indarba na nDéisi</i> (Rawl. B. 502)*	Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, §38.1	HG 2	JC 12–13
		Stater	
		Pincr Misser	Miser
	Kustennin		Custennin
	Maxen Wledig		Maxen Wledig
			Maximianus
		Constans	
		Constantinus	Constantinus
		Magnus	Mawr
		Constantius &	Custenint &
		Helen Luicdauc	Elen

* For *Indarba na nDéisi*, HG 2, and JC 12–13, see Bartrum, *Tracts*, pp. 4, 9–10, and 45–6. The text from the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies has been taken from my forthcoming edition.

† *Gwledyr* is here called a daughter, perhaps due to the unfamiliarity of the corrupted name-form.

‡ For this name and the name below see B. Guy, 'A Second Witness to the Welsh Material in Harley 3859', *Quaestio Insularis: Selected Proceedings of the Cambridge Colloquium in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic* 15 (2014), pp. 72–91, at pp. 81–2; Bartrum, *Tracts*, p. 153, n. 18a.

St Davids. It has been suggested previously that a comparable archive was used to construct the pedigrees of the kings of south-east Wales in the Harleian genealogies.⁶⁰ Although no charters from pre-Norman St Davids are now extant, there is evidence from more than one authority for the survival of such documents into the sixteenth century.⁶¹ Among the extracts supposedly taken from these documents in the sixteenth century are transcribed letter forms resembling the script used for the ninth-century Old Welsh charters preserved in the Lichfield Gospels;⁶²

⁶⁰ B. Guy, 'Did the Harleian Genealogies Draw on Archival Sources?', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 32 (2012), pp. 119–33.

⁶¹ C. Brett, 'John Leland, Wales, and Early British History', *Welsh History Review* 15 (1990–1), pp. 169–82, at pp. 179–81; W. Davies 'The Latin Charter-Tradition in Western Britain, Brittany and Ireland in the Early Mediaeval Period', in D. Whitelock, R. McKitterick and D.N. Dumville (eds), *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe. Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 258–80, at p. 261, n. 19; Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, I.i, pp. 246–7, n. 1, and II.ii, pp. 428–30.

⁶² Brett, 'John Leland', p. 180; D. Jenkins and M.E. Owen, 'The Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 5 (1983), pp. 37–66; 7 (1984), pp. 91–120. For the transcribed letter forms, see R. Flower, 'William Salesbury, Richard Davies, and Archbishop Parker', *National Library of Wales Journal* 2 (1941–2), pp. 7–16, plate IV B.

spellings that probably pre-date the twelfth century;⁶³ and, as William Salesbury emphasized, a preponderance of biblical names, characteristic of the Britons in the early Middle Ages.⁶⁴ Most importantly for present purposes, the extracts include the names of some of the early kings of Dyfed who appear in the Dyfed pedigree, including ‘Noe Rex Demetiæ’ (‘Nowy, king of Demetia/Dyfed’) and Nowy’s father, ‘Arturius Petri filius sed recentior veteri Arturio’ (‘Arthur son of Pedr, but more recent than the old Arthur’).⁶⁵ The position of Arthur, Nowy, and Pedr in the pedigree suggests that they lived during the seventh century.⁶⁶

There is therefore good evidence that charters were indeed written and preserved in St Davids during the early medieval period, and that these charters included in them the names of the early kings of Dyfed, occasionally alongside their patronymics. These documents may have been eventually gathered together into the lost volume referred to by John Leland as *De Dotatione Ecclesiae S. Davidis*.⁶⁷ Such a series of charters might have been used in the eighth century to help construct the pedigree of the kings of Dyfed back to Tryffin, and the continued existence of the archive might have prevented this section of the pedigree from changing too obviously.

There is a further indication that the evidence of the charters might have stretched back as far as Tryffin. This is provided by Gerald of Wales’s list of the bishops of St Davids, which extends from St David, who supposedly died in 601, to Peter de Leia, who occupied the see (1176–98) at the time when Gerald was writing.⁶⁸ Although some names in the list, such as that of St Samson, have been inserted retrospectively, there is no reason to doubt entirely the names of the bishops between David in the late sixth century and Sadyrnfyw in the

⁶³ E.g. ‘Iudnerth’, the first element of which is Old Welsh *iud*, ‘lord’. From the middle of the eleventh century, *iud*, when occurring as the first element of a compound, was usually spelt *id*: Sims-Williams, ‘Emergence’, p. 79; K.H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain: A Chronological Survey of the Brittonic Languages, First to Twelfth Century A.D.* (Edinburgh, 1953), pp. 345–6. Another example is *LLan Sanfrigt*, modern Welsh ‘Llansanffraid’, which seems to preserve Old Welsh *g* for *lʃl*: Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.ii, p. 429; cf. P. Sims-Williams, *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: Phonology and Chronology, c. 400–1200* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 288–9; Jackson, *Language*, p. 453.

⁶⁴ Flower, ‘William Salesbury’, p. 11; cf. R. Sharpe, ‘The Naming of Bishop Ithamar’, *EHR* 117 (2002), pp. 889–94, at pp. 893–4; Davies, ‘Old Testament Personal Names’.

⁶⁵ Flower, ‘William Salesbury’, p. 11; Richard Davies in W. Salesbury, *Testament Newydd ein Arglwydd Jesu Christ* (London, 1567), b.iv verso; *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535–1543*, ed. L.T. Smith, 5 vols (London, 1964), IV, p. 168; *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary*, ed. T. Hearne, 9 vols, 3rd edn (London, 1768–9), VII, p. 150.

⁶⁶ Cf. Brett, ‘John Leland’, p. 180; Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.ii, p. 429.

⁶⁷ *Itinerary*, ed. Smith, III, p. 123.

⁶⁸ Gerald of Wales, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.1, ed. Dimock, pp. 102–4; trans. Thorpe, pp. 161–2. See 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), pp. 296–304.

early ninth. The list, like the pedigree, is exactly the kind of document that could have been compiled using the evidence of a sequence of charters. If such a sequence of charters commenced within a generation or so after the time of St David, then Tryffin is a likely candidate for the representative of the limit of historical memory at the time that the archive was initiated. That the monastery of St Davids had an active scriptorium at this early date might be suggested by the survival of a group of four related penitential texts of possible sixth-century origin, extant in two Breton manuscripts of the ninth and tenth centuries. One of these texts is entitled *excerpta quedam de libro davidis*.⁶⁹

If the stable section of the Dyfed pedigree belongs to the world of history and authentic sources, the unstable sections beyond Tryffin belong to the world of pseudo-history and retrospective invention. In the case of the Dyfed pedigree, such activities can be assigned, with some confidence, approximate dates, provenances, and causes. Figure 5 presents a stemma of the proposed relationships between three of the four versions of the pedigree laid out in the table above. The common archetype [α] of all four versions of the pedigree must have existed by the floruits of Tewdwr and Tewdos, sons of Rhain, in the middle of the eighth century, at which time a version of the pedigree was probably taken to Ireland and incorporated into *Indarba na nDéisi*. The latter provides the earliest witness to the archetype. It is unlikely that Tryffin's Irish ancestry, as found in the Irish tale's pedigree, was invented in Ireland, because elements of it are present in the three Welsh versions of the pedigree. At a later stage [γ], in the tenth century, a derivative of α was incorporated into the St Davids genealogical collection as the pedigree of Owain ap Hywel Dda's mother Helen. It is likely that the pedigree was transmitted to the St Davids collection via the early ninth-century Dyfed tract [β], as partially witnessed by JC 8.

Stage γ is best represented by the Harleian genealogies and the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies. The Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies comprise a Welsh genealogical collection composed in the early thirteenth century and extant in manuscripts from the fifteenth century onwards.⁷⁰ One section of this text drew material from the mid-tenth-century St Davids genealogical collection.⁷¹ Both the Harleian genealogies and the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies include the pedigree of Owain ap Hywel Dda traced through his mother Helen. It is clear from Table 1, however, that the earlier part of the

⁶⁹ L. Bieler with D.A. Binchy, *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin, 1963), pp. 3 and 70; D.N. Dumville, *Saint David of Wales* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 15.

⁷⁰ B. Guy, 'A Lost Medieval Manuscript from North Wales: Hengwrt 33, the *Hanesyn Hên*', *Studia Celtica* 50 (2016), pp. 69–105, at p. 77.

⁷¹ Guy, 'Second Witness', pp. 81–90.

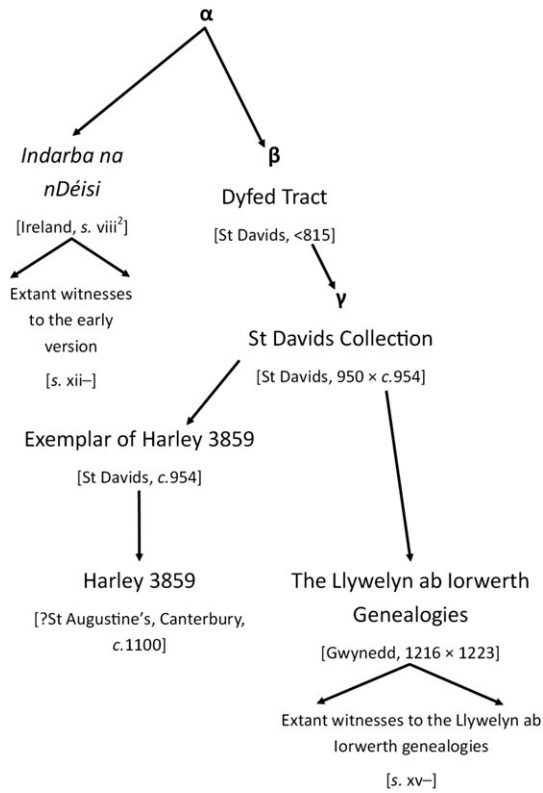


Fig. 5 The transmission of the Dyfed pedigree

pedigree must have been altered significantly in at least one of these two versions at some point between the mid-tenth century, when the St Davids collection was first created, and the texts extant in the manuscripts. Despite the general superiority of the Harleian genealogies as a witness to the St Davids collection, it would appear that, in this case, it is the Harleian genealogies that give the altered version.

There are two main points of difference between Tryffin's ancestry in the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies and the Harleian genealogies. One is that only the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies preserve the name *Ewein Vreïsg*, which, as the name of Tryffin's father, is seemingly equivalent to the Irish *Áed Brosc*.⁷² *Ewein* seems to have been

⁷² Patrick Sims-Williams has suggested that the *Brosc* element in the pedigree was originally an independent personal name rather than an epithet: P. Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence on Medieval Welsh Literature* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 181–2; *idem*, 'The Significance of the Irish Personal Names in *Culhwch ac Olwen*', *BBCS* 29 (1980–2), pp. 600–20, at pp. 618–19. For criticism, see Ó Cathasaigh, 'Déisi', pp. 20–2.

triplicated in both the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies and in JC 12–13, probably as the (shared) result of two more of *Ewein's* supposed sons having been accidentally incorporated into the main stem of the pedigree.⁷³ The occurrence of *Aed Brosc* in *Indarba na nDéisi* suggests that *Aed Brosc/Ewein Vreisg* was present in the archetype, meaning that he has been removed from the text of the Harleian genealogies. The second point of difference concerns the very end of the pedigree. In the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, the lineage is traced back to Magnus Maximus (Macsen Wledig in Welsh), who had, by the early ninth century, become a symbolic representative of post-Roman authority among the Britons, as mentioned above in relation to the Pillar of Eliseg.⁷⁴ In the Harleian genealogies, however, the line is traced back to Constantius (d. 306) and his wife Helen, the latter of whom, as the text goes on to relate, was responsible for the discovery of the true cross. HG 2 thus begins and ends with two women called Helen, the mothers of Owain and Constantine the Great respectively, creating a neat and undoubtedly intentional symmetry.⁷⁵ This symmetry can only have been created once Helen became the focus of the Dyfed pedigree in the tenth century.

The two points combine to suggest that the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, rather than the Harleian genealogies, preserve the form of the pedigree closest to that of stage γ , when it was first inserted into the St Davids genealogical collection along with the rest of the Dyfed tract. The Harleian genealogies, on the other hand, preserve a version that was altered after stage γ . The changes visible in the Harleian genealogies were intended to bring the earlier stages of the pedigree into line with contemporary political thought. Maximus was retained as the younger Helen's ancestor, although he was brought forward in time to be the father of the eponymous *Dimet*, 'Dyfed'. Constantius and Helen were added in the place of Maximus as the ultimate ancestor figures. At the same time, the most obvious Irish elements in the pedigree were removed. This was probably because, by the tenth century, Dyfed was ruled by the powerful Merfynion dynasty, which claimed descent from Cunedda Wledig.⁷⁶ The latter was the man who, according to the *Historia Brittonum* (which accompanied the St Davids genealogical collection at stage γ), had expelled the Irish from Britain,

⁷³ Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.i, pp. 277–8, n. 1.

⁷⁴ See above, n. 17.

⁷⁵ M. Miller, 'Royal Pedigrees of the Insular Dark Ages: A Progress Report', *History in Africa* 7 (1980), pp. 201–24, at p. 204; *eadem*, 'Date-Guessing and Dyfed', p. 37.

⁷⁶ Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.i, p. 279; Ó Cathasaigh, 'Déisi', p. 21; Thornton, *Kings, Chronologies and Genealogies*, p. 154; *idem*, 'Orality', pp. 87–8; *idem*, 'Power, Politics and Status', pp. 91–2.

and so it would have been undesirable for his putative descendants to be seen intermarrying with families of Irish extraction.⁷⁷

The place of JC 12–13 in this scheme is harder to ascertain. This pedigree was originally included in a collection of genealogies designed to magnify the position of Morgan ab Owain of Morgannwg (Glamorgan, in south-east Wales), who ruled from c.930 until his death in 974.⁷⁸ JC 12–13 largely agrees with the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, with the exception of what appears to be a lacuna between the third *Ewein Vreisc* and *Miser*.⁷⁹ Particularly indicative are the omission of Rhain, father of Tewdos, and the insertion of Erbin as father of Gwrthebyr, two innovations found in neither HG 2 nor the older *Indarba na nDéisi*. However, other aspects of JC 12–13 indicate that it has undergone a degree of textual conflation.⁸⁰ These include the names *Prwtech* and *Miser*, which equate to *Protecl/Protector* and *Misser* in HG 2, but which are absent from the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies. The names are probably based on the Latin titles *protector* and *mistor* ('drink-mixer'), as are two of the other additional names in HG 2, *Stater* (*stator*, 'magistrate's marshal') and *Pincr* (*pincerna*, 'cup-mixer, cup-bearer').⁸¹ Strikingly, the only known attestation of *mistor* (in the form *mixtor*) in the Latin of medieval Britain occurs in Latin Redaction B of the Welsh laws, where the *mixtor poculorum*, 'mixer of drinks', appears in a list of the officers of the court.⁸² All of these Latinate names may have been inserted into the Dyfed pedigree deliberately at the same time that the Irish elements were expunged, during the creation of the Merfynion version in HG 2. However, since the pedigree in JC 12–13 otherwise shares textual innovations with the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies, which preserve the earlier, pre-Merfynion version of the pedigree, the Latinate names *Prwtech* and *Miser* may have entered JC 12–13 due to an act of conflation with an external source containing the revised version of the pedigree found in HG 2.

Although the place of JC 12–13 in the stemma must remain, to a degree, conjectural, the process of 'pedigree growth' undergone by the Dyfed pedigree over the centuries when it was actively copied remains

⁷⁷ *HB*, §§14 and 62, ed. Faral, *La légende*, III, pp. 13 and 42.

⁷⁸ Lloyd, *History*, I, pp. 338, n. 66 and 353.

⁷⁹ Miller, 'Date-Guessing and Dyfed', p. 37.

⁸⁰ Phillimore in Owen, *Description*, II.i, pp. 277–8, n. 1. Thornton, less plausibly, saw the Llywelyn ab Iorwerth genealogies as containing the conflated version: 'Power, Politics and Status', pp. 84–5.

⁸¹ E.W.B. Nicholson, 'The Dynasty of Cunedag and the "Harleian Genealogies"', *Y Cymmrodor* 21 (1908), pp. 63–104, at p. 81.

⁸² H.D. Emanuel, *The Latin Texts of the Welsh Laws* (Cardiff, 1967), p. 193; *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, ed. R.E. Latham, D.R. Howlett *et al.* (London, 1975–2013), p. 1812.

apparent. At stage α , possibly in the eighth century, a twelve-generation pedigree from Tewdwr or Tewdos to Tryffin was constructed, perhaps using evidence from the archive of St Davids. It may have been at the same time that extra generations were added beyond Tryffin, confirming the alleged Déisi origin of the dynasty. At some point between α and γ , possibly when the pedigree was incorporated into the Dyfed tract at stage β in the early decades of the ninth century, the pedigree was extended back further again to include such figures as Clydwyn, supposed conqueror of south Wales, *Dimet*, eponym of Dyfed, and ultimately that great symbol of post-Roman legitimacy, *Maxen Wledig*.⁸³ Later, at St Davids in the mid-tenth century, genealogists working under the new Merfynion regime removed the visible Irish elements from the Dyfed pedigree and instead honoured their king's mother Helen by deriving her lineage from Helen, finder of the true cross and mother of Constantine the Great, perhaps implying at the same time that the latter-day Helen's son Owain should be considered a second Constantine.

Processes of 'pedigree growth' such as those explored above probably lie behind many early medieval genealogies, but rarely is one able to observe the process quite as clearly as in the case of the Dyfed pedigree. A comparative textual study such as the one presently undertaken allows the historical credibility of the long and often intractable lists of personal names appearing in genealogical manuscripts to be thrown into sharper relief. The vexed question of the historical reliability of genealogical texts as direct evidence for the early medieval period can be seen to be a complex one indeed. Rarely is a simple answer applicable to a whole genealogy, let alone an entire genealogical collection. Some sections might represent biological fact, other sections pseudo-historical edifice, and others still subsequent re-workings of the fact and the fiction combined. Until these layers are teased out of each surviving genealogical text, the historical use of medieval pedigrees can only proceed on the most tentative basis.

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⁸³ For Clydwyn, see *De situ Brecheniauc*, §11.3, ed. Bartrum, *Tracts*, p. 15; Phillimore, *Annales Cambriae*, p. 171, n. 4.