

Trace the origins and development of the cult of any saint from the Celtic regions paying particular attention to the literary texts and the key sites associated with them.



Fig.1. St Teilo, riding a white stag
(image from 15th century glass, Plogonnec, Finistere, Brittany)

There is one thing that can be said for certain about St Teilo, and that is nothing is certain. This is because the earliest surviving manuscripts date from six hundred years after the saint is thought to have lived. Also, the way in which saints were viewed at the time that the documents were created led to records of their lives being part fact and, almost certainly, part fiction. The aim of this essay is to look at the extant documentation (in translation) and from this create a picture of who was St Teilo, what role he played in the spread of Christianity and how this was achieved. It will also look at how the manuscripts are very much a product of their time; examine to what extent this may have influenced what was recorded about St Teilo and how this coloured the way in which he has been portrayed in the prevailing centuries. Teilo, who was also known as Eliud, was a 6th Century A.D. saint who is believed to have been born in Penally in what is now south Pembrokeshire and he is associated with other areas of South Wales and Brittany in which the cult of St Teilo thrived.

¹ He is closely associated with St David ², the patron saint of Wales, and St Padarn, also linked with south Wales ³, both of whom are also accepted to have lived around the 6th Century A.D. These three saints, along with several others, are acknowledged to be the great monastic founders of Wales. ⁴ There are three extant Lives of St Teilo, two are written in Latin and the third in Middle English. ⁵ Only two other Welsh saints, David and Winefride, have Lives which were written in

¹ Dictionary of Welsh Biography, Teilo <<https://biography.wales/article/s-TEIL-SAN-0500>> [accessed 24 April 2025].

² Dictionary of Welsh Biography, St David <<https://biography.wales/article/s-DEWI-SAN-0600>> [accessed 24 April 2025].

³ Dictionary of Welsh Biography, St Padarn <<https://biography.wales/article/s-PADA-SAN-0560>> [accessed 24 April 2025].

⁴ John Edward Lloyd, and Aberystwyth former location United Theological College, *A History of Wales* (Ernest Benn, 1930) p. 152

⁵ Ben Guy, *The Vespasian Life of St Teilo and the Evolution of the Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*
<https://www.academia.edu/84537675/The_Vespasian_Life_of_St_Teilo_and_the_Evolution_of_the_Vitae_Sanctorum_Wallensium>
[accessed 24 April 2025].

more than one language and exist in multiple versions.⁶ Before discussing the actual documents, it is helpful to look at how saints like Teilo came to exist, what made them saints, what was the cult of a saint, and the role played by a cult.

Very little is known about the early church in Wales, which was part of the wider Celtic Church, what was written did not come into existence until much later and was subject to, at best, misinterpretation and, at worst, deliberate misrepresentation in order to serve the political needs of the church of the day.⁷ In her book *The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church*, Nora Chadwick describes the late 5th century to the late 7th century as 'The Age of the Saints', being a very significant period in the history of the Celtic Church in which it was 'characterized by the prevalence of 'saints''.⁸ Chadwick also states that during this time a saint in the Western Church would mean an educated or literate man, '... not necessarily 'a saint' in any sense.'⁹ These were also not saints recognized by the Catholic church. It may be reasonable to assume that Christianity was first introduced to Wales following the Roman invasion of AD 43 and that it could have also been spread by visiting Christian missionaries from Continental Europe, although there is almost no actual evidence to support this theory.¹⁰ After the Romans left Britain in circa AD 408, Welsh Christianity adopted a monastic system that was known as the *clas* (plural *clasau*) system and which was family based.¹¹ Initially these may have consisted of an abbot who was the leader of a tribal family or community from which members went on to establish remote religious communities and churches named after their founding community and served by their local saint.¹² These churches and religious communities were, for the most part, independent and did not integrate into mainstream continental Christianity but there appears to have been some co-operation between them, (in the case of St Teilo there is evidence that he was linked with the Breton church, as will be seen later in this essay).¹³ It is from such beginnings that the Saint's cults developed, some were to remain small and extremely localized but for saints such as David and Teilo they would become popular, aided by the support of wealthy patrons, and become known to people further afield.

As with other saints, the cult of Saint Teilo would have been active during his lifetime, but it would also have continued long after his death as the veneration of a saint's relics were seen to have been equal to the veneration of the saint themselves. The term 'cult' is derived from the Latin, cultus,

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Roger, L. Brown, 'The Age of Saints to the Victorian Church', in *A New History of the Church in Wales: Governance and Ministry, Theology and Society*, ed. by Norman Doe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 9–26

⁸ Nora K. Chadwick, *The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church: The Riddell Memorial Lectures, Thirty-Second Series, Delivered at King's College in the University of Durham on 22, 23 and 24 March 1960* (Llanerch Publishers, 1997) p. 2-3

⁹ *ibid* p.5

¹⁰ 'The Age of Saints to the Victorian Church', in *A New History of the Church in Wales: Governance and Ministry, Theology and Society*, ed. by Norman Doe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 9

¹¹ Chadwick, *The Age of the Saints in the Early Celtic Church* p. 139

¹² Roger, L. Brown, 'The Age of Saints to the Victorian Church' p.10

¹³ *ibid* p.10

which describes the veneration of people recognized to be saints.¹⁴ Saints were seen by their followers to have some direct form of access to God and with divine assistance they were thought to be able to perform many types of miracles, not only during their lifetime but also after their death, these included curing the sick, protecting people of harm, famine and pestilence, as an example.¹⁵ The saints were believed to be able to intercede with the divine on behalf of a sinner and in doing so they could rid the sinner of the result of any divine judgement of punishment, which was often thought to be the reason for ailments or affliction, or to simply stop them from going to hell on the day of judgement.¹⁶ However, the ability or power to be able to deliver these miracles did not belong to the saints but came from the divine with the saint being just a chosen channel for delivery of miracles.¹⁷ Miracles and the ability to deliver some form of divine intervention features very heavily in the Lives of the saints and St Teilo is no exception having many and divers miracles attributed to him as evidenced by the extant manuscripts.

As previously mentioned, there are three surviving documents in which the Life of St Teilo was recorded. These are:

- Vita Sancti Teliaui (*Liber Landavensis*), *The Book of Llandaff*, NLWMS 17110E¹⁸
- Vita Sancti Teliaui (*Vespasian A. xiv*), B.M. MS. Vespasian A, xiv¹⁹
- BM Egerton 2810²⁰

Reference will also be made to a further extant manuscript, The St Chad Gospels, as this provides antidotal evidence about the Cult of St Teilo.

Vita Sancti Teliaui (*Liber Landavensis*), NLW MS 17110E

¹⁴ Thomas Head, 'The Cult of the Saints and Their Relics', <www.hagiographysociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Head_Cult-of-Saints.pdf>, [Accessed 24th April 2025].

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ National Library of Wales, *Book of Llandaff*, <<https://www.llyfrgell.cymru/darganfod-dysgu/arddangosfeydd-arlein/llawysgrifau/yr-oesoedd-canol/llyfr-llandaf>>, [Accessed 24th April 2025].

¹⁹ needs reference

²⁰ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, BM Egerton 2010 <

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180818082111/http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/manuscripts/ongoingcoll/ongoingcollections.html#egerton>>, [Accessed 24th April 2025].



Fig. 2 Book of Llandaff showing 13th century bronze statue. Source: National Library of Wales

This manuscript is held at the National Library of Wales and there is also a digital version available online.²¹ The book is commonly known as the Book of Llandaff and is thought to have been written between 1120 and 1140, being one of the earliest extant ecclesiastical manuscripts in Wales.²² It comprises 128 parchment sheets which were originally bound with oak covers coated with a thin layer of silver, of which only the lower cover remains today. For centuries the cover of the Book of Llandaf was adorned with an image of Christ in glory which was which was unusual for this type of book, the fine bronze statue dated from mid 13th century and was make in England.²³ In addition to the Life of St Teilo, the book also contains the life of two other Saints, Dyfrig (Dubricius, ?465) and Euddogwy (Oudoceus, ?630) both of whom along with St Teilo were former Bishops of Llandaff.²⁴ The book provides an insight into the history of the church in Llandaff from its earliest times and its situation post the Norman conquest of 1066. However, there appears to be a political agenda to the creation of the manuscript that was undertaken at the request of Urban, the Bishop of Llandaff who was appointed bishop in 1107.²⁵ There is a general belief among scholars and historians that Urban commissioned the creation of the book to strengthen his case in an ongoing dispute that he had with the Bishop of St David's and the Bishop of Hereford concerning dioecian boundaries and property rights in southeast Wales.²⁶ This may explain why the manuscript contains a large number of copies of Charters, some of which are fake, and which record land and properties that were given to the Diocese of Llandaff between the 5th - 11th centuries.²⁷ This, combined with the inclusion of the three saints Lives can be interpreted as a deliberate and thought-out plan by Urban to artificially inflate and overstate the status of his bishopric. The history of the manuscript is well known from the 17th century from which it passed through a succession of private collectors before being deposited in the National Library of Wales

²¹ National Library of Wales, *Book of Llandaff*

²² *ibid*

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ *ibid*

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ *ibid*

in the early 1940s and then purchased by the Library in June 1959.²⁸ That said, the way in which St Teilo and other documents related to him were given prominence in the *Liber Landavensis* speaks to the importance and influence still held by the cult of St Teilo.²⁹ This may also explain why the Life of St Teilo is presented as longer and more descriptive in the *Liber Landavensis* than in *Vespasian A. xiv* as here his importance and that of his cult is being magnified to provide additional status to Urban's bishopric in the same way that the land owning was aggrandised. The difference and the relationship with *Vespasian A. xiv* will be further looked later in this essay. There are two translations of the *Liber Landavensis*:

- The Liber landavensis, Llyfr Teilo, or The ancient register of the cathedral church of Llandaf. W. J. Rees (Welsh Manuscript Society, i 840)³⁰
- The Book of Llan Dav, ed. J. G. Evans with J. Rhys (Oxford, I 893)³¹

B.M. MS. Vespasian A, xiv

Vespasian A, xiv is an earlier and less studied manuscript that is likely to date from the late twelfth century and been written in Latin in Monmouth Priory which is held at the British Library.³²

Note To Tutor – This section is incomplete

BM Egerton 2810

Of the three extant manuscripts known to contain the Life of St Teilo, this appears to be the least studied. It is held in the British Library as part of the Egerton Collection, a corpus of historical manuscripts gifted in 1829 to the British Library by Francis Henry Egerton, 8th Earl of Bridgewater.³³ The manuscript is part of the *South English Legendary*, a collection of saints' lives written in Middle English Verse that survives in sixty-three non-identical manuscripts.³⁴ According to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Egerton MS 2810, folios 94–99 is a Middle English metrical life of Telyou which might have been written in Gloucester, and which was based on an

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ Ben Guy, Vita Sancti Teliaui (Liber Landavensis) <<https://saints.wales/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/TeliauiVesp.pdf>>, [Accessed 25th April 2025].

³⁰ <https://archive.org/details/liberlandavensi00reesgoog/page/n7/mode/2up?q=Vespasian>

³¹ <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028051559/page/n7/mode/2up?q=teilo>

³² Ben Guy, Vita Sancti Teliaui (Liber Landavensis)

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egerton_Collection

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180818082111/http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/manuscripts/ongoingcoll/ongoingcollections.html#egerton>

³⁴ https://medieval_literature.en-academic.com/553/South_English_Legendary%2C_The

earlier Vita.³⁵ In 'The Middle English Life of St Teilo' (The Mediaeval Journal, 6.i[2016] 29-72), Kooper and Callander analyse the poem The Life of St Teilo, which is written in Middle English, and found only in BM Egerton 2810 and describe it as a metrical adaptation of the Latin lives.³⁶ It seems unlikely that this would have been the Book of Llandaf version as the English text occasionally appears closer to the Vespasian edition than The Liber Landavensis also there is evidence that an additional exemplar may have also been used.³⁷ Kooper and Callander believe that the manuscript provides important information about St Teilo for the following reason.

'Like every medieval country or region, Wales had its own array of local saints, and indeed, in common with other Celtic lands, it had these in abundance. With some exceptions, like St David, many of these were venerated only in Wales, or only in Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany. This seems to a large extent to have been the case with Teilo. The Middle English text is thus very significant in giving a rare glimpse of the veneration of Teilo beyond the modern borders of Wales.'³⁸

In terms of structure, MS Egerton 2810 is a parchment manuscript of 188 folios, measuring roughly 230 × 160 mm. Originally, the manuscript contained nineteen quires of which three have subsequently been lost. The majority of the texts were written by two scribes using an Anglicana script which, together with textura influences dates the work to the second half of the fourteenth century. The linguistic profiles of the scribes located them both with some certainty in Gloucestershire.³⁹ This would support the theory that the translation from the Latin to Middle English was made at St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester which may have possessed a copy of the Latin life, and which had the only known calendar in England to contain Teilo meaning that Teilo was venerated at St Peter's and may be the reason why his life was translated into English.⁴⁰ The vita for Teilo appears to be out of place in the manuscript whose entries are strictly ordered by saints' day which raises the question why this might be and was Teilo originally to have been included when the manuscript was planned or was he a later addition and, if so, why?⁴¹ Some reasons why this might have happened are considered by Kooper and Callander, but these can only be seen as theories. The authors also note that the St Teilo text contains some irregularities in terms of spelling and use of words (dialect) that are not found in the other content of the manuscript and these indicated that the dialect of the original poem was from South-East England and not Gloucestershire. Egerton 2810 dates from the second half of the fourteenth century and as the scribes would have been working from an exemplar the poem would originate from an earlier date.

³⁵ <https://repository.bilkent.edu.tr/server/api/core/bitstreams/3a80e1cd-83b4-451b-b5a4-ff7d60bad459/content>

³⁶ The Middle English Life of St Teilo Erik Kooper and David Callander
[/https://research-portal.uu.nl/files/255770933/kooper-callander-2016-the-middle-english-life-of-st-teilo.pdf](https://research-portal.uu.nl/files/255770933/kooper-callander-2016-the-middle-english-life-of-st-teilo.pdf)

³⁷ *ibid* pp. 43 - 46

³⁸ *ibid* p.31

³⁹ *ibid* p.32

⁴⁰ *ibid* p. 50

⁴¹ *ibid* pp. 34-38

How much earlier is difficult to ascertain but the linguistic evidence suggests that St Teilo was composed in the late thirteenth century, approximately one hundred years prior to the creation of Egerton 2810.⁴² According to Kooper and Callander, the poet can clearly be identified as an Englishman who aligned himself with England and not Wales and who was not in Wales at the time the poem was written.⁴³ He is clearly quite unfamiliar with Wales generally but may have been aware of the larger ecclesiastical centers such as Llandaf and St Davids.⁴⁴ The poem of St Teilo is also written in a slightly different metre to the South English Legendary which is a heptametre or septenary form of seven-beat line of verse that has four stressed syllables in the first half line and three in the second, separated by a caesura (indicated in the manuscript by a punctus or a punctus elevatus).⁴⁵ Whereas in the poem of St Teilo there are usually six stressed syllables. For example:

Séynt Telyóu þe býssop þat wás of móche prís

Wás ibóre in Wáles, alsó ich wéne iwís,

Óf þe grétest lórdinges of ál þat sýde.

Óf his gréte gódnesse me télleþ suíþe wíde. (lines 1–4)⁴⁶

The St Chad Gospels

In addition to the three Lives described above, there is an important connection to St Teilo in the St Chad Gospels (also known as the Litchfield Gospels or the St Teilo Gospels) which dates from the late ninth century.⁴⁷ Written in the margins of the manuscript in Old Welsh (also includes some words in Latin) is the record of a man called Gelhi trading a horse for the book which he then gives to the church of St Teilo in the town of Llandeilo.⁴⁸ At some later unknown date, the book travelled to Litchfield in England where it is currently housed at Litchfield Cathedral.⁴⁹

⁴² ibid pp. 43-44

⁴³ ibid p. 48

⁴⁴ ibid pp.48 - 52

⁴⁵ ibid p.45

⁴⁶ ibid p.45

⁴⁷ <https://lichfield.ou.edu/basicinfo-c>

⁴⁸ <https://lichfield.ou.edu/141-intrigue>

⁴⁹ <https://lichfield.ou.edu/basicinfo-c>

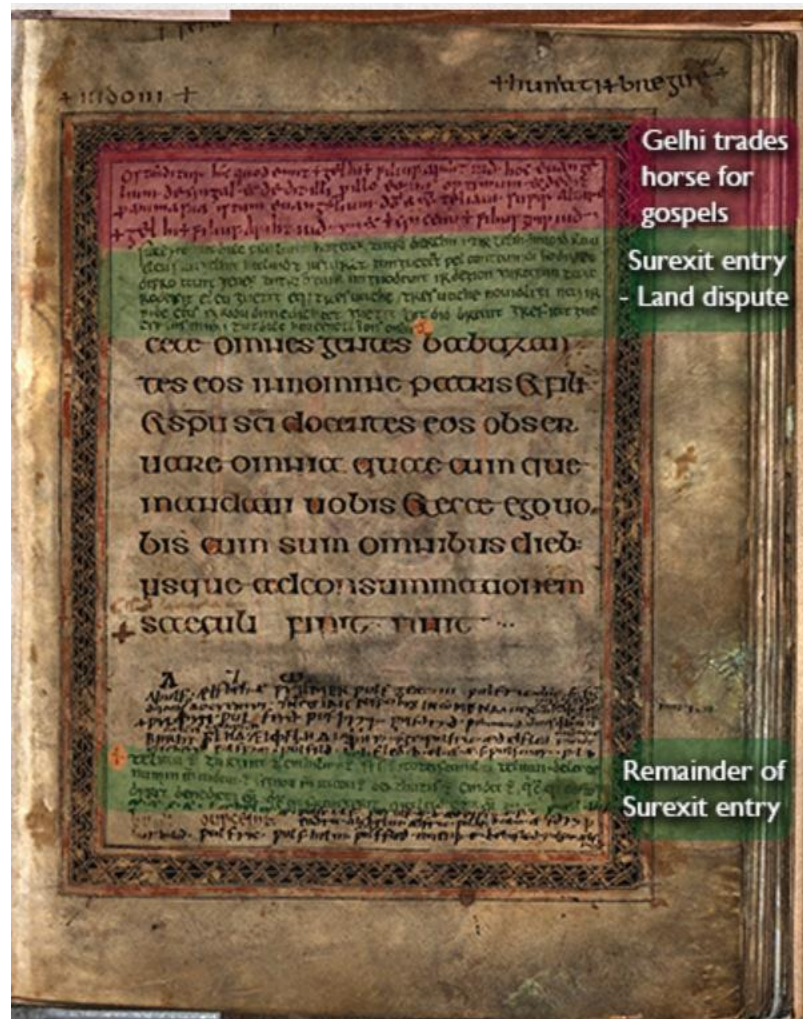


Fig. 3: Gospel of St Chad, Multispectral visualizations for pg 141 showing Old Welsh memorandums . Source: Lichfield Cathedral, Creative Commons licensing.

Although this is a very small margin note, it provides strong evidence that even three hundred years after St Teilo is thought to have lived, his Cult was not only still in existence but also well venerated enough that Gelhi would have traded his horse, no doubt something of value, in order to purchase the book and donate it to the St Teilo's church in Llandeilo. This may have been a form of request to the dead saint to intercede on behalf of Gelhi who may have been seeking redemption from sin or to be cured from illness of affliction.

As previously mentioned, there was an aspect of political agenda associated with the writing of St Teilo's Life, why this might be the case, and the credibility of the manuscripts requires some analysis before moving on to what is recorded in the Lives about St Teilo, his life and his work. It is perhaps not by chance that the *Liber Landavensis* and *Vesparian A*, xiv were written when they were. This was a time during which the Normans posed a threat to the Welsh Church that had not

existed in the preceding centuries of conflict with the Anglo-Saxons. The Normans sought to impose change on the old system of *clasau* (see above) which Elissa R. Henken describes as the replacement of Welsh monastic communities and centres of learning with a new, more standardized system, akin to the continental system, which would see the creation of new diocese with exact boundaries and Latin monasteries that would all be under the control of Canterbury and Rome.⁵⁰ Henken goes on to explain that it was through the use of *vitae* that the Welsh Church sought to defend its rights using their patron saints' *vitae* to prove that land and privileges had been granted to them kings thus providing them with a status superior to that of other saints.⁵¹ Henken then cites the *Liber Landavensis* as a prime example of the political use of a *vitae*.⁵² At first glance, the Middle English version, MS Egerton 2810, might not seem to fit with this model but Henken provides an explanation by saying that the Anglo-Normans clerics also created *vitae* to help the status of their own churches that were based on traditions and saints local to the areas they invaded.⁵³ The question of credibility is examined by Wendy Davies in her journal article, 'Land and Power in Early Medieval Wales', where she opens with the fact that the *Liber Landavensis* was once debated as being the work of a twelfth-century ecclesiastical forger yet used as a major scholarly primary source of Welsh history pre Norman conquest and how these opposing schools of thought have been able to exist for such a long time given the composite nature of the manuscript.⁵⁴ Davies highlights a problem with the order in which the charters are arranged, which should be chronological, but is inconsistent and requires individuals to be alive to witness documents an impossibly long time after they are known to exist.⁵⁵ She continues to highlight inconsistencies including the reference to a 6th century grant to the Bishop of Llandaff which is highly unlikely to have happened as the see of Llandaff did not exist prior to the 1120s.⁵⁶ There are many further examples, some of which are to do with the technical construction of the manuscript that lend credence to the argument that *Liber Landavensis* is not exactly a truthful representation of facts which Davies describes as,

‘... an attempt to produce a coherent exposition of the exercise of the powers of the bishop of Llandaff over the preceding five centuries. In doing this there can be no doubt that the author indulged in some dishonest manipulation, in the interests of his church...’⁵⁷

What does the evidence of the politically motivated creation of the *Liber Landavensis*, with contents that may have been manipulated or even completely fabricated, mean to the way in which

⁵⁰ Cartwright, Jane, ed., *Celtic Hagiography and Saints' Cults* (University of Wales Press, 2022) p.30

⁵¹ *ibid* p.30

⁵² *ibid* p.30

⁵³ *ibid* p.30

⁵⁴ Davies, Wendy, 'Land and Power in Early Medieval Wales', *Past & Present*, 81, 1978, p. 335

⁵⁵ *ibid* p. 336

⁵⁶ *ibid* p. 336

⁵⁷ *ibid* p.350

the *Life of Teilo* should be read and interpreted? Firstly, it should be recognised as being the description of a legend based on a person who, on the balance of probabilities, existed some six centuries before the manuscript was created. Some of the geographical and genealogical information may be true in part, but this too may have been manipulated to suit the required narrative. Secondly, it is intended to describe a series of miraculous events which are supposed to exalt the saint, demonstrate their connection with the divine, and their ability to intercede on behalf of their followers and fellow believers. Churches benefited from their association with strong and powerful saints through the gifts bestowed upon and the way in which they portrayed the saints may have been less and ultraistic, in just the same way as they looked to use their close connection with the saints to bolster the status of their church.

The following summary of the Life of St Teilo is taken from *The Liber landavensis*, *Llyfr Teilo*, or *The ancient register of the cathedral church of Llandaf*. W. J. Rees (Welsh Manuscript Society, i 840).⁵⁸ The translation starts by identifying Teilo as also being known as Eulid who was instructed as a child by St Dubricius, also known as St Dyfrig, that he later succeeded as Bishop of Llandaff. Teilo then lived with Paulinus, who had founded a monastery in Whitland, Carmarthenshire. It was here that he was to meet St David and together with Paulinus, they spent their time in discussion and contemplation of the scriptures. Whilst staying with Paulinus, Teilo went into the woods with Maidoc to collect firewood and there they were met by two tame stags in the wood who offered to be harnessed to help with the collection of wood. Such examples of saints taming wild animals are frequently found in *vitae*. Whilst not being a miracle, this interaction is designed to indicate the saintly nature of Teilo. The first miracle happens when Teilo discovers a book that has been left outside in heavy rain but has remained dry. Shortly after this, God send an angel to tell St Teilo, St David that they should travel to Jerusalem which they did, accompanied by St Padarn. They didn't take any money with them, instead they trusted in God to provide for their needs. Along the way they ministered and healed the sick. They were warmly welcomed when they arrived in Jerusalem where they were offered the choice of three chairs. St Teilo takes the least ornate of the chairs and preaches to those around him who could all hear him as if he was speaking their own languages. This is the gift of tongues, again something associated with Teilo's holiness. During the visit to Jerusalem, Teilo was elected by the people and made a bishop. All three saints received a gift during their visit, for St Teilo it was the gift of a bell. The bell is described as some kind of time-keeping piece that strikes every hour with the sweetest of sounds. A bell is often used as a symbol that invites men to wake from the depth of slumber and sloth and return to the church. All three saints then returned to their own countries and for Teilo this was to the diocese of Llandaff to which he had been consecrated. However, he was not there very before he was forced to leave the country due to an outbreak of 'Yellow Pestilence'. At the time an angel spoke to St Teilo telling him to go overseas and that he should collect together the remains of his people and for them to follow him. First Teilo travelled with his suffrage bishops and men of other orders to Cornwall where he met with King Gerennius (Geraint in Welsh) and took his confession.

⁵⁸ <https://archive.org/details/liberlandavensi00reesgoog/page/n7/mode/2up?q=Vespasian>

From there he set sail to Amorica (Brittany) which was another Celtic speaking area. Here he was well received and met with Samson, Archbishop Dôl, with whom he shared a history as they were both born in the same place, spoke the same language and had both been taught by St Dubricius. St Samson asked Teilo to live with him, which he did for a long-time performing miracle whilst he was there to prove his sanctity. These included the creation of the fountain at a place called Cai, again another frequent miracle reported to have been performed by other saints, the healing of the sick and he interceded with the sailors of Armonica to provide wind for their sail and a calm sea on which to sail. He also, St Samson and St Teilo planted a grove of fruit trees which reported still existed and bore fruit at the time the *Liber Landavensis* was written. During St Teilo's stay in Amorica, he received news that the 'Yellow Pestilence' had left Britain causing him to send messengers to his countrymen in France and Italy telling them that they should all now return to their own country. For this purpose, Teilo arranged 3 great ships for their travels, but the news of his departure was met with sadness on the part of the locals. One night as St Teilo and his people were waiting for a good wind by which to set sail, King Budic (who was local to the area) along with his men, visited St Teilo where he asked for him to help defeat a massive viper that had destroyed almost a third of his country. It should be noted that in this specific translation the beast is described as a viper, a serpent and also a winged dragon. At the point an angel appeared and informed St Teilo that it was safe for him to approach the beast, which he did. Taking a piece of his own clothing, Teilo tied it around the neck of the animal rendering it mild and gentle (parallels here to the stags earlier in the story). Teilo then led the beast using his clothing to a rock in the sea to which he tied the creature. The people of Amorica feared that if Teilo left their shores, the beast would return and destroy them so they asked him if they would stay but God tells him that he must leave but not to mount the horse the people provide for him but to wait for the horse that God will send him. This he did and he went to Dôl as he was also instructed by God. There he saw King Budic and gave him that horse that he himself had been given by God. Teilo prayed that all of the soldiers of Amorica would excel in horsemanship allowing them to defend their country and avenge their enemies. This blessing was bestowed on the horsemen of Amorica and remained with them right up to the writing of the *Liber Landavensis*. At this time, St Teilo learned that King Gerennius was dying and for that reason prepared the ships to visit the King which would have been seven years and seven months since they last met. St Teilo took with him a stone coffin in which to bury Gerennius. The voyage ended at the harbour of Dingerein (which is an ancient settlement in Cornwall) and St Teilo was able to minister to the King just prior to his death. After this St Teilo returned to his own episcopal see with many of the people who had accompanied him on his voyage to Amorica. There he remained until the end of his life with his church growing in numbers and strength. On the night that St Teilo died, three churches tried to claim his body. These were Penally, Llandeilo Fawr and Llandaff all of which have been associated with St Teilo at some point during his life (and would have welcomed the qudos that would have accompanied having his relics). To resolve this issue, St Teilo performed yet another miracle turning his dead body into three dead bodies, one for each of the churches.

The sites associated with St Teilo are most frequently found in south Wales where more than twenty churches or place names still exist today. These usually take the form of Llandeilo or Llandeilo plus some other information, such as 'big/large' in the case of Llandeilo Fawr. The term 'llan' was used in Welsh to describe a medieval enclosure associated with a church. It later became the word used for the church itself. Hence Llandeilo, meaning the church of St Teilo which was an early central site for the cult of St Teilo. However, there is no extant hagiography to support this and by the time the *Liber Landavensis* was written Teilo had moved his cult and his grants of land to the diocese of Llandaff. There may be some truth in the story of St Teilo's voyage to Amorica (Brittany) as five parish churches there are dedicated to him and in the town of Landaul he is considered the Patron Saint of apple trees. St Teilo is also associated with Cornwall. There appears to be some kind of association between St Teilo and St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester as the inclusion of his saint's day in their calendar implies that he would have been venerated by the church. If this is correct, it is the only known church in England where this happened. St Teilo is usually thought of as having his saint's Day on 9th February but can change in different areas. In Brittany the church at Dôl celebrates on 29th November and the for the rest of the Brittany churches it is 25th November. In Wales, the church at Llandilo Fawr is the only church not to celebrate on 9th February, instead they observe Saint's Day on 20th February or on the Sunday following that date, a practice that first started in 1752.

In conclusion, St Teilo appears to have been a real person who lived in the sixth century and sought to spread Christianity in south Wales, from which he originated, and in other Celtic speaking areas i.e. Cornwall and Brittany. The greatest testimony to him and the Cult of St Teilo is the proliferation of place names and churches that are associated with his name. Without any extant hagiography it is difficult to say what happened during his lifetime and for reasons already described in this essay, the extant *vitae* that were created six hundred years after he lived most likely only contain a very small amount of truth. However, as a saint from the Age of Saints it would be fair to say that he is one of Wales' better-known saints and as such also better researched. His name certainly lives on even in the twenty-first century despite the fact that what we know about him is more fiction and fact.

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