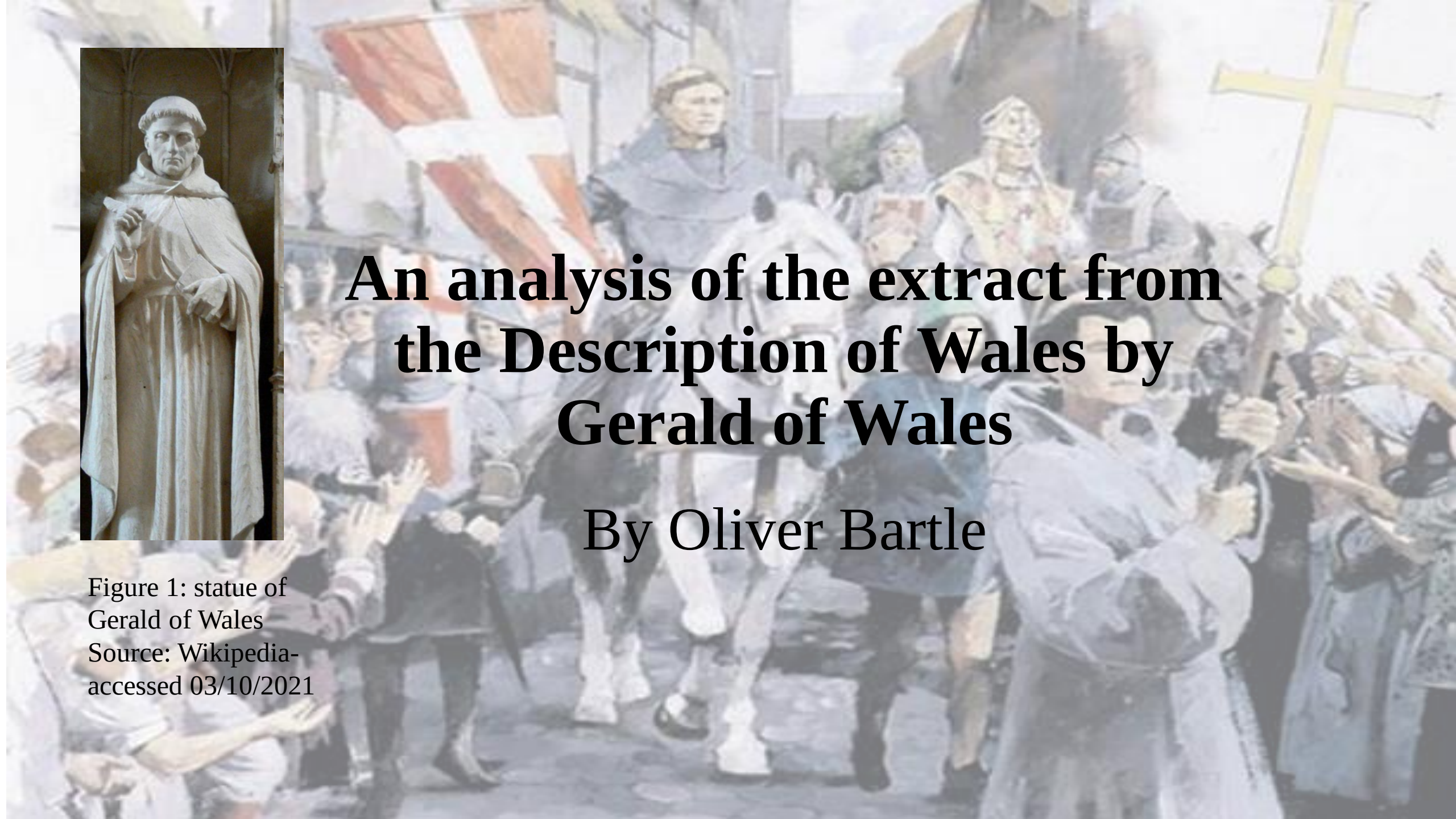


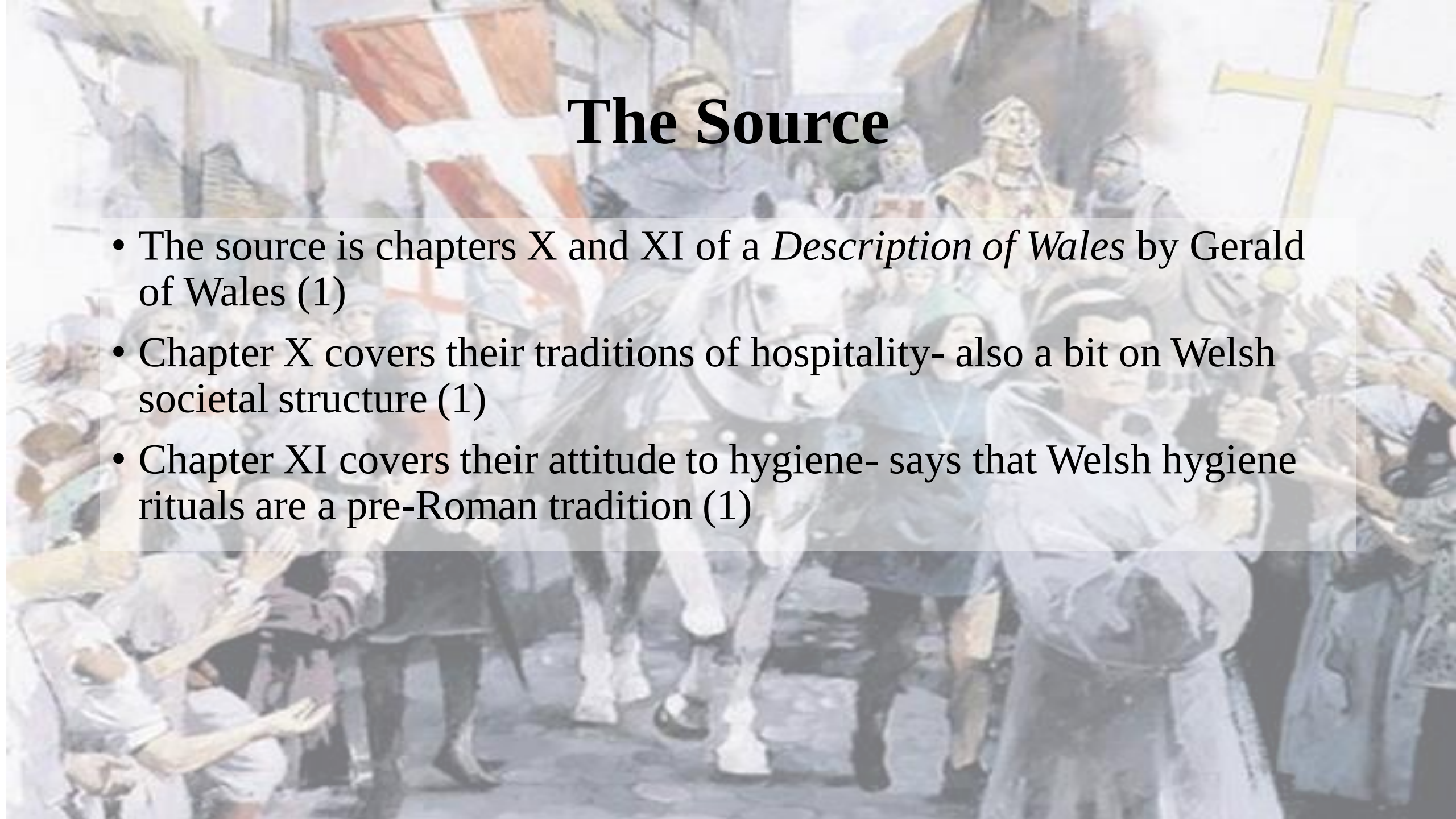


Figure 1: statue of
Gerald of Wales
Source: Wikipedia-
accessed 03/10/2021

An analysis of the extract from the Description of Wales by Gerald of Wales

By Oliver Bartle





The Source

- The source is chapters X and XI of a *Description of Wales* by Gerald of Wales (1)
- Chapter X covers their traditions of hospitality- also a bit on Welsh societal structure (1)
- Chapter XI covers their attitude to hygiene- says that Welsh hygiene rituals are a pre-Roman tradition (1)

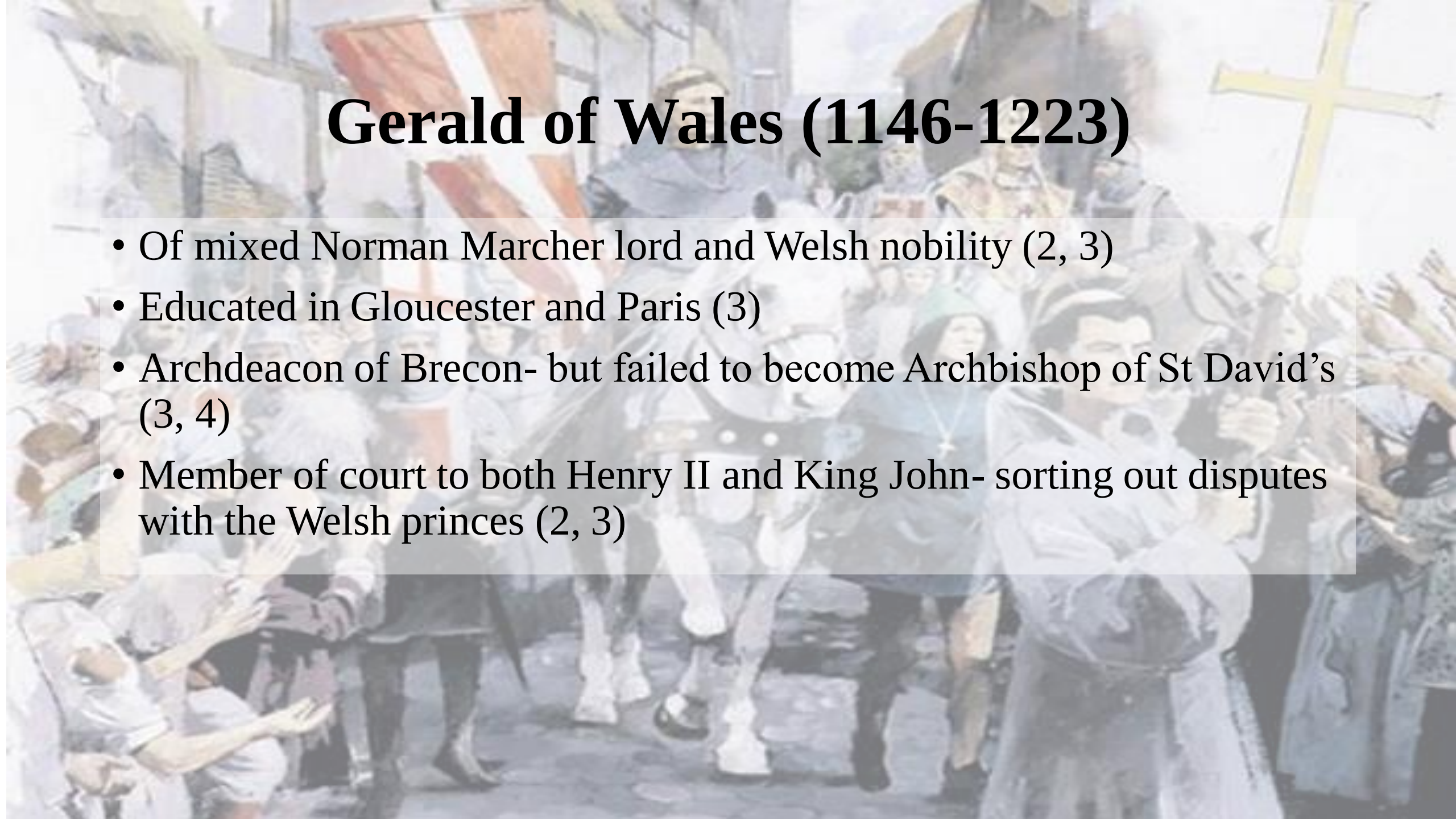
Gerald seems to have a conflicting attitudes towards the Welsh

Positive portrayals of the Welsh

- Good traditions of hospitality and charity (1)
- Strong sense of hygiene (1)
- Strong pre-Roman culture (1)
- Only educate children in harp (1)

Negative portrayals toward the Welsh

- Seems to suggest that their still tribal (1)
- Says “attached only to arms and ease” (Gerald, chapter X)- suggesting they are warlike but lazy (1)
- Seems to imply their traditions are both hospitable but primitive (1)
- Only educate children in harp (1)



Gerald of Wales (1146-1223)

- Of mixed Norman Marcher lord and Welsh nobility (2, 3)
- Educated in Gloucester and Paris (3)
- Archdeacon of Brecon- but failed to become Archbishop of St David's (3, 4)
- Member of court to both Henry II and King John- sorting out disputes with the Welsh princes (2, 3)

The Historical and geographical background

- Wales in the late 1100s (1, 2, 3)
- The Description of Wales- 1194 (4)
- Itinerary of Wales- 1188 (4)
- Third Crusade (5)
- Norman attempts to conquer Wales (6)
- The struggle as to who controlled the church in Wales- Canterbury or St David's (6, 7)

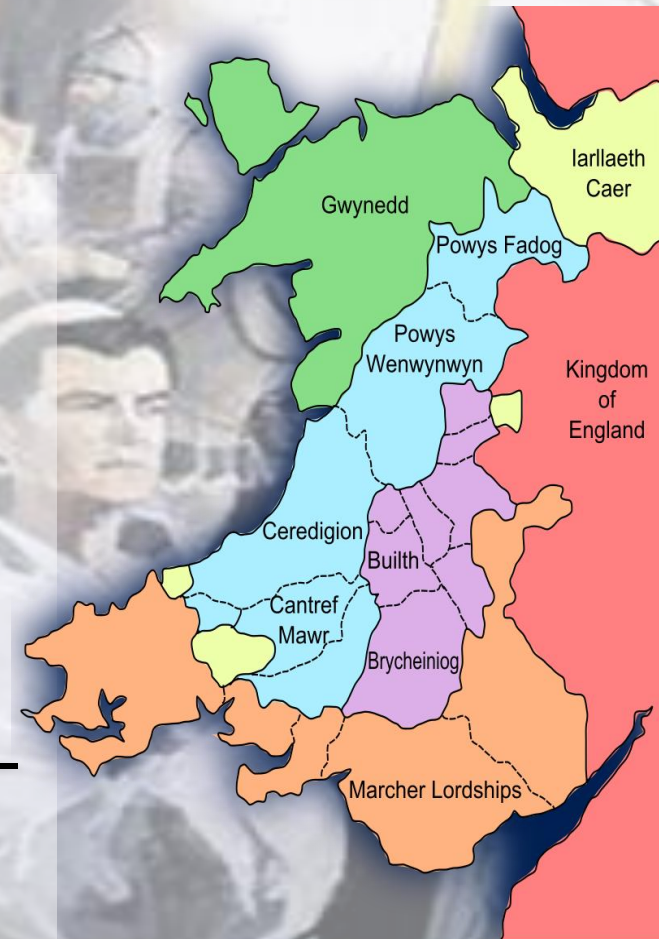


Figure 2: Map of Wales in 1267- orange and cream are owned by England- other colours Wales
Source: Wikipedia- accessed 03/10/2021

Why does the source have historical significance

- Gerald of the few Welsh historical chroniclers of the time and the only author that focused purely on Wales (1, 2, 3)
- Could give you a toned down version of Marcher Norman views of the Welsh, as well as some Welsh views.
- It does give us some idea of the local customs that he observed amongst the ordinary Welsh of the time
- Gerald seems to put both sides of the argument the extract and so can be accepted as reliable- so long as his backstory is taken into account, so that his motives can be discerned

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