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The Welsh Latin chronicles: *Annales Cambriae* and related texts¹

In 1928 that great historian, John Edward Lloyd, gave the Sir John Rhys inaugural lecture to the British Academy on 'The Welsh Chronicles'.² He was mainly concerned with the Bruts, and he showed that these were translated from a Latin text which was related, in an unspecified way, to the *Annales Cambriae*. Since then, another distinguished Welsh scholar, Thomas Jones, has edited and translated the Peniarth 20 and Red Book of Hergest versions of the *Brut y Tywysogyon* and *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, and has worked out the relationship between these texts.³ It is now clear that the Latin original of these Welsh chronicles was compiled towards the end of the thirteenth century, most probably at Strata Florida. The Peniarth 20 version and the Red Book of Hergest version are independent Welsh translations of that original. *Brenhinedd y Saesson* is a third independent Welsh version of the same text down to 1197, but after this is dependent on the other Welsh translations. The brief continuation of Peniarth 20 from 1282 to 1332 was written at Valle Crucis, as Goronwy Edwards has demonstrated.⁴ So the student of the Welsh texts, largely owing to the devoted work of Thomas Jones, is now on firm ground.

But when he turns to the Latin annals all around him is still a quagmire. There are four versions of the text known as *Annales Cambriae*. The earliest, BL MS. Harley 3859, written *ca* 1100, has been well edited by Egerton Phillimore.⁵ BL MS. Cotton Domitian A.1⁶ and the annals on the flyleaves of the Breviate Domesday in London, Public Record Office, MS. E. 164/1 both date from the end of the thirteenth century. With the exception of fifty-five years transcribed in parallel columns by Lloyd⁷ they have still to be consulted in the

¹ The Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture to the British Academy, read on 17 October, 1973; first published in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 59 (1973) 233-58. There is a review by D. Dumville, *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/8) 461-7.

² Lloyd, 'Welsh chronicles'.

³ Jones, *Brut y Tywysogyon* (3 vols), and *Brenhinedd y Saesson*.

⁴ In a review of Jones, *Brut y Tywysogyon: Peniarth MS. 20* in *English Historical Review* 57 (1942) 370-5.

⁵ 'The *Annales Cambriae*'; there is also a text in Faral, *Légende*, III.44-50.

⁶ BL Cotton Domitian A.1 is made up of two manuscripts. The section we are concerned with is fos 56-160.

⁷ Lloyd, 'Wales and the coming', pp. 165-79.

edition of John Williams, *Ab Ithel*.⁸ This is not even an accurate copy of the PRO manuscript, which Ab Ithel uses as the basis of his text after 954, and at least the Cottonian manuscript has to be completely transcribed before any comparison of the Cottonian and PRO versions can be made.⁹ The annals in the fourth manuscript, the thirteenth-century Exeter Cathedral Library MS. 3514, have been well edited by Thomas Jones under the title *Cronica de Wallia*.¹⁰ A critical edition of the *Annales Cambriae* is much needed but, meanwhile, historians need to know how the texts were put together, what sources were used, when and where the annals were compiled, and how the different texts relate to each other. This lecture is an attempt to answer some of these questions.

The starting-point of any inquiry into the Latin annals must be Harley 3859 (Ab Ithel's A). The annals here are written in an Anglo-Norman hand of ca 1100.¹¹ The last entry refers to the death of Rhodri son of Hywel (in 954) and the annals are immediately followed by genealogies which start with Owain son of Hywel. Both annals and genealogies are incorporated into a text of the *Historia Brittonum*. The Harleian annals were almost certainly completed in their present form before the death of Owain in 988 and probably in, or soon after, 954.¹²

As Lloyd pointed out, from 796 until 954 the annals must have been kept at St David's. Maredudd of Dyfed with his sons and grandsons dominates the beginning of the period, Hyfaidd of Dyfed and his son Llywarch are important towards its close, though here attention is concentrated on the great kings of Seisyllwg, Cadell, Clydog, and Hywel. Llywarch's daughter Elen married Hywel Dda, who secured Dyfed, and Hywel's son Owain was thus descended on his mother's side from kings of Dyfed. Five bishops of St David's are mentioned, as well as a burning and an attack on the city. St David's thus provides the controlling interest. But the annals were kept in a haphazard way, with spurts of activity and periods of inertia.¹³

There are strong reasons for thinking that the chronicle was started at St David's in the late eighth century, for a year-by-year chronicle nearly always

⁸ *Annales Cambriae*; or, for the period 445–1066, see Petrie & Sharpe, *Monumenta*, pp. 830–40.

⁹ For comments on the edition, see Phillimore, 'Welsh historical records', pp. 140–8.

¹⁰ 'Cronica de Wallia' and other documents'.

¹¹ David Dumville has very kindly sent me the following note on this manuscript: 'It is not yet possible to assign it to any centre. The contents, in this order, are: Vegetius, Macrobius, the spurious *Inuectiva* of Cicero and Sallust, the *Historia Brittonum* interpolated by the *Annales Cambriae* and the Welsh royal genealogies, part of Augustine's *De haeresibus*, Solinus, Aethicus Ister, Vitruvius. The whole is a unity, the product of a single scriptorium.'

¹² Phillimore, 'The *Annales Cambriae*', p. 144, argues that the annals were finished in 954 or 955 because they do not mention the battle of Llanrwst, fought in 955.

¹³ Between 796 and 817 there are nineteen entries, including four kings of Dyfed and a burning of St David's. Then there is a very thin phase, with only sixteen entries in forty-four years though two of these are bishops of St David's. Between 862 and 887 there is another spurt of entries, eighteen in all. The first half of this period covers the episcopate of Nobis. Then for twelve years there are three entries, followed by nine between 900 and 909 when (according to Giraldus Cambrensis) Asser was bishop of St David's. His death brings in another lean period, with only six entries in twenty-eight years. Then between 938 and 954 there are sixteen entries; two bishops of St David's are mentioned.

shows signs of localisation, and the Harleian annals point to St David's only from the late eighth century. The earlier part was a scholar's exercise compiled well after the events. There is nothing in the form of the names which requires us to assume compilation before the late eighth century.¹⁴ Moreover the annalist was definitely interested in the Easter controversy,¹⁵ and the later eighth century was a period when this interest was most lively in Wales. These arguments all point to annals which begin to be kept regularly at St David's in the late eighth century.

If the Harleian annals before this date are not a year-by-year chronicle, but the compilation of some scholar, one would expect to be able to trace his sources. This is possible. Up to the battle of Chester in 613 there is a close correspondence with the Irish annals. Moreover, the Harleian annals for this period with their preponderance of ecclesiastical entries look like Irish annals, for there are twenty ecclesiastical entries and eleven secular ones; and of these eleven, seven are British entries which are not found in the Irish annals.¹⁶ Some of the Irish entries were obviously made much later in time than the events, for the births of saints are backward-looking entries. The Irish saints chosen by our annalist are ones which a Welshman much later, picking out the salient events in the history of the Irish Church, might choose to record.¹⁷ The

¹⁴ Professor Kenneth Jackson has very kindly advised me about these. There are three unusual forms. In *Adomnan*, the *o* points to a source not later than the first quarter of the eighth century, but this could very well have been from the *Vita Columbae* itself. The form *Ceniøyd* (776) is apparently not of Irish origin, and looks as if it might have come from a Pictish source. In the reference to Kentigern, one might expect the spellings *Cintigimi* or *Centigimi* for Kentigern, instead of the *Conthigimi* which appears: but on this see Jackson, *Language and History*, pp. 669 and 676, where it is clearly shown that there is no reason to regard the *o* as archaic or strange. The very rare use of *th* for Old Welsh *t* (= /d/) is paralleled in the Life of St Cadog and in the Book of Llandaf.

¹⁵ He starts with a change in the date of Easter by Pope Leo I (at the Fourth General Council), he notes England's adoption of the Roman Easter (in 664), and in 768 the Britons', under the influence of Elfoddw, who died in 809. The Easter question implies an interest in chronological studies, and could have stimulated a desire for a chronological record in late eighth-century Wales.

¹⁶ On the Irish annals see Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 97–160; Smyth, 'Earliest Irish annals'; Mac Niocaill, *Medieval Irish Annals*. The section of the Annals of Tigernach relating to the fifth century begins in 489, but after 489 all but three entries in the Harleian annals are in both the Annals of Ulster and the Annals of Tigernach. All except three of the entries are in the Annals of Inisfallen.

¹⁷ Patrick and Benén, Brigit and Íbar (both Leinster saints), all belong to the first phase; Ciarán of Clonmacnoise and Columcille are great monastic founders. Brendan of Birr is more of a puzzle. Gabrán son of Domangart was founder of the Cenél nGabráin in Kintyre; his son Aedán was the famous king of Dál Riata who ruled in the time of Columcille, and he fought the battle of Eubonia. David, Gildas, and the battle of *Cair Legion* would obviously interest a Welshman. The Irish annals mentioned in the last note are not using dating from the Incarnation, and they obviously had difficulties with their dating in this early period, so it is not surprising to find that the Harleian annals do not agree precisely with the Irish annals in their chronology. But the only wild discrepancy is over the date of St David: I think, therefore, that this entry may not be from the Irish annals but from some Welsh source. Mrs Chadwick (*Early British Church*, p. 55) sees a significant similarity between the monasteries named among the signatories of the Synod of Birr (Meyer, *Cáin Adamnáin*, pp. 16–18) and those named in the Harleian annals. But the order is not, as she claims, the same (in the annals the death of Brigit is the fourth Irish obit, while Kildare comes tenth in the *Cáin*) and houses at the beginning of the list in the *Cáin* are omitted in the annals (the Irish Bangor, Lismore, Lorrha). It may be, however, that the Irish annals and material concerning the date of Easter came into Wales by the same channels.

section of close Irish dependence stops when Isidore's chronicle comes to an end, and we know that Irish annalists were using this text.¹⁸

These extracts from a set of Irish annals provide the background into which the compiler has fitted eleven British entries, the seven secular ones already mentioned and four ecclesiastical entries.¹⁹ The main interest of the British entries is certainly in North Britain and North Wales, areas which we already know were closely connected dynastically and by literary interests. The annals name three descendants of Coel Hen, the battle of Arfderydd, the death of Kentigern, two kings of Gwynedd, and the burial of Daniel of the Bangors. Cynog of Brycheiniog, who at first looks odd, is said in *De Situ Brecheniauc* to be related, by the marriage of his sister, to the line of Coel Hen.²⁰ The only entry definitely out of line is Dyfrig, a saint of South-East Wales; and he might well be an addition, for the entry reads *Conthigirmi obitus et Dibric episcopi*. The battles of Badon and Camlann, which have caused so much discussion, are among these eleven non-Irish entries. Camlann may well be a northern battle. Badon, for good historical reasons, would seem to have been fought in the south of England.²¹ But a battle of such significance would have been entered in any British chronicle, and it does not invalidate the northern orientation of the rest of the early British entries.

When we move on to the middle section of the Harleian annals which runs from the early seventh to the late eighth century, the main source seems to be this northern chronicle.²² There is a close parallel with the northern history section of the *Historia Brittonum*.²³ Both texts give an account of the struggle between Cadwallon, king of Gwynedd, and his successors, joined by Penda of Mercia, against the Northumbrian kings Edwin, Oswald, and Oswy. Both name the battles similarly: *Meicen*,²⁴ *Catscaul* or *Cantscaul*,²⁵ *Cocboy*,²⁶ and *Gai*.²⁷ But in spite of the close correspondence, the Harleian text could not have been

¹⁸ The Annals of Inisfallen at 612 state: 'the fifth year of the emperor Heraclius [610-41] and the fourth year of King Sisebutus, and the end of Isidore's chronicle'. It seems likely that the Irish source determined the date at which the St David's annalist chose to begin his chronicle. He used an Easter-cycle of 532 years and put in his first entry (concerning the date of Easter) at the ninth year. The beginning of the cycle would correspond to the date at which Irish annalists calculated the founding of Armagh. I am grateful to David Dumville for clarifying my ideas on this and other points. [For 445 as the first year, and for its purely Welsh significance, see now Miller, 'Disputed historical horizon', p. 23.]

¹⁹ The death of Gildas, a British cleric, is in the Irish annals (at 570 in the Annals of Ulster).

²⁰ My pupil Philip Jenkins pointed this out to me. See Bartrum, *Genealogical Tracts*, pp. 14-16.

²¹ See Jackson, 'Once again' and 'Site of Mount Badon'. There is an enormous literature about the Arthurian legend. Two of the most important discussions are by Jones, 'Early evolution', and Jackson, *apud* Loomis, *Arthurian Literature*, pp. 1-19. Alcock, *Arthur's Britain*, provides a good discussion of the archaeological evidence, but is sometimes misleading on the literary sources; for example, p. 73, n. 41.

²² For this whole section, see Jackson, 'Northern British section', and Dumville, 'North British section'.

²³ On the *Historia Brittonum* see the important article by Dumville, 'Nennius'.

²⁴ Hatfield Chase, where Cadwallon slew Edwin and his two sons.

²⁵ Denisesburna, near Hexham, where Cadwallon was killed by Oswald. See Williams, 'Bellum Cantscaul'.

²⁶ Maserfelth (Oswestry), where Oswald fell. See Williams, 'A reference'.

²⁷ Winwaed, where Oswy conquered Penda and the Britons.

derived from the *Historia Brittonum*. There are entries which the *Historia* does not have²⁸ and, probably even more significant, fundamentally different reportings of the same events.²⁹ On no less than three occasions the annals substantially diverge from the *Historia* and could not have been directly derived from the *Historia*.

Nor could the *Historia* have taken its account from the annals. The different reporting argues against it, and moreover the *Historia* provides information which is not in the Harleian annals.³⁰ It seems certain, therefore, that there was an account of the struggle between Britons and Northumbrians which the annals and the *Historia* used independently.³¹

The other texts with which we must compare the Harleian annals during this period are the earlier recensions of the Irish annals, for though the close correspondence of Welsh and Irish annals ceases in 613, most of the entries are present in both Welsh and Irish annals, though in different guise. But the Welsh annals could not have been copying here from the Irish. Even if we put the early Irish recensions together (and the Annals of Tigernach provide the most help) the Welsh annals have a number of details and entries which the Irish annals do not give.³² On the other hand the Irish annals give some entries which are missing from the Welsh annals but which the scribe of the Welsh text might have been expected to copy.³³ In fact the exemplar of the Harleian annals is much closer to the exemplar of the *Historia Brittonum* than to the Irish annals. It looks as if the 'Chronicle of Ireland'³⁴ had access to a northern chronicle, but that this was a stage removed from the exemplar of the Harleian annals and the *Historia*.

What was their prototype like? The source of the *Historia Brittonum* and the ultimate source of the Harleian annals cannot have been in chronicle-form. If it was, why did the compiler of the *Historia* have to turn to an Anglo-Saxon king-list to provide his chronological structure? It must have been North British memoranda, mainly concerning Gwynedd, Mercia, Elmet, and the area which is now the Scottish border. The author of the northern history section of the *Historia Brittonum* used these memoranda, incorporating them into an English regnal list similar to that in the Moore manuscript of Bede. These Northumbrian kings presumably meant something to him and his readers, so he was writing in a part of Britain open to English influence. Another compiler used the same memoranda, together with the obits of Strathclyde and Pictish kings and their battles,³⁵ entries which give his

²⁸ See below, p. 92.

²⁹ See below, p. 92f.

³⁰ See below, p. 94.

³¹ For a different view of the relationship, see D. Dumville, *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/8) 466-7.

³² See below, p. 94.

³³ See below, p. 94f.

³⁴ For this lost source, see Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 99-115.

³⁵ The deaths of three kings of Strathclyde are recorded: Beli, his son Tewdwr, and Tewdwr's son Dyfnwal. There are four Pictish entries: the battle of Monad Carno among the Picts, the death of *Ougen* king of the Picts, a battle between the Picts and Britons in which Talorgan died, and the death of King Cinaed.

northern chronicle a more northerly orientation than the *Historia*. The compiler of the northern chronicle may therefore have come from further north, from an area in closer contact with the Picts.³⁶ At some time after 777 (the last of the northern entries) the northern chronicle was used by the St David's chronicler, and his annals formed the exemplar of the Harley manuscript.³⁷

The northern chronicle must have looked rather different from the Irish annals. If the Welsh annals had used Irish annals to compile this central section of the Harleian text, you would expect to find certain characteristics which are absent. You would expect more entries about Iona: at least the record of her conversion to the Roman Easter (for our scribe was interested in that) and the obit of Ecgbreht, whose influence achieved it. You would expect more Irish entries, especially for Leinster and southern Ireland, whereas there are only two. You would expect more ecclesiastical entries: the only three here are the obits of Adomnán, Bede, and Cuthbert of Monkwearmouth.

We cannot be sure where the northern chronicle was drawn up.³⁸ The compiler, using the North British memoranda, had fairly full sources for the wars of the English and Britons during the reigns of Edwin, Oswald, and Oswy on the Northumbrian side, Cadwallon, Cadwaladr, and Penda on the other. After this his sources were not very satisfactory – a few Strathclyde and English kings, a few Pictish battles, three outstanding northern ecclesiastics. It was the best he could do with the sources at his disposal. There are a few *mirabilia*-entries in this section of the Harleian annals,³⁹ and a few Welsh and South British entries have been inserted.⁴⁰ These cover a wide area. There are two Gwynedd entries, which were probably in the northern chronicle. The other entries concern Dyfed, Cornwall, and Hereford. They are an attempt retrospectively to provide a set of annals, and are the work of the St David's compiler in the late eighth century, or possibly of another reviser.

We may therefore conclude that from the late eighth century a record was kept at St David's, though some periods are much thinner than others and it was not always written up regularly year by year. Welsh chroniclers appear to have been nothing like so active as Irish ones in the same period. The contemporary St David's chronicle began fairly soon after Wales accepted the Roman Easter (768): but a preliminary section had to be provided, and for this the compiler used extracts from the Irish annals down to 613, and extracts

³⁶ I am grateful to Donald Meek for discussing this with me.

³⁷ It is significant that the Strathclyde entries in the Irish annals stop in 780 for nearly a hundred years – that is, at almost the same time as they do in the Harleian annals. Since they do not cease when the Iona chronicle stops in 741, I think they were entered in Ireland and did not reach the Irish annals via the Iona chronicle. The Irish annals have Strathclyde and Pictish entries not in the Harleian annals.

³⁸ Glasgow would be a likely place; but, if so, I think that the North British memoranda come from farther south.

³⁹ Mostly paralleled in the Irish annals, so they may have been in the northern chronicle. See below, p. 99f.

⁴⁰ These are listed below on p. 100. Three entries about Offa of Mercia come between the last northern entry (Abbot Cuthbert) and the first entry of the St David's group (Maredudd of Dyfed).

from a northern chronicle, into which he inserted a few other entries. The Arthurian entries of course belong to this preliminary section, and it should now be clear that there is no ground for Leslie Alcock's assurance that they go back to a contemporary source.⁴¹ BL MS. Harley 3859 contains this set of annals down to 954. They are one of our few sources for the early history of Wales, so that the way they have been constructed, whether or not they were contemporary, what sources the compiler used, are all questions of vital interest to the historian.⁴²

Now let us turn to the annals in BL MS. Cotton Domitian A.1, fos 138r–155r (Ab Ithel's C), which were transcribed at the end of the thirteenth century.⁴³ These begin with an Isidoran⁴⁴ section on the six ages of the world, into which have been inserted a few entries on British history derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth.⁴⁵ The Cottonian annals continue to use Isidore as their framework right down to the reign of Heraclius (610–41), citing the reign of each emperor and giving the appropriate British references under it. After Heraclius the annals change to a year-by-year format, marking each year with *annus*. This emphasises the break at the end of Isidore's chronicle which we have already noted in the Harleian annals.

The Cottonian annalist was using a text closely akin to the Harleian annals, but down to 734 he has rewritten it according to Geoffrey of Monmouth. His account of Arthur, Cynan, Godebyr (*Vortiporius*), Maelgwn, Ceredig, Cadfan, Cadwallon, Cadwaladr, and Ifor is that of Geoffrey. Arthur is treated at some length, Cadwallon's fight with Northumbria in less detail than in the Harleian text.⁴⁶ The Cottonian annals down to 734 are valueless as history, but they show the enormous influence of Geoffrey not only on romance but on historical writing. Between 734 and the end of the Harleian annals the two recensions of annals look very similar, and both show the same St David's orientation, but

⁴¹ Alcock (*Arthur's Britain*, pp. 3, 45–9) believes that the fifth- and sixth-century entries were made in contemporary Easter-tables. This is not impossible, but it is much more likely that they are based on the calculations of an eighth- (or perhaps seventh-) century scholar.

⁴² The preceding account of the Harleian annals is a summary of much detailed work which is thoroughly expounded in chapter VI below. For somewhat different views on two of the issues discussed, see D. Dumville, *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/8) 466–7, and Dumville, 'North British section'.

⁴³ I am most grateful to Professor Julian Brown for advising me about the date of this hand, and about the hands of the Welsh entries in London, PRO, MS. E.164/1.

⁴⁴ I mean that he is using some text ultimately based on Isidore of Seville's chronology (as seen, for example, in *Etymologiae*, V.39).

⁴⁵ The Isidoran section was not in the early St David's manuscript which the Harleian scribe copied. The dates in Harley are approximately as they are in the Irish annals, whereas in the Cottonian manuscript some of the dates are wildly out: for example, Pope Leo's change of Easter is placed in the reign of Valentinian II, 383–92; Patrick's floruit under Arcadius, 395–408; the Synod of Urbs Legionis under Anastasius, 491–518; the death of Gildas under Justin I, 518–27; the battle of Chester under Justin II, 565–78. The compiler of the Cottonian version had an Isidoran framework. Into this he put material from Geoffrey of Monmouth and entries from the St David's annals (from a text similar to Harley).

⁴⁶ There can be no doubt that this is derived from Geoffrey. There is nothing which cannot be found in Geoffrey except the date of the *adventus Saxonum*, 438. The other calculation from the Incarnation, 542, the end of Arthur's reign, is in Geoffrey. The order of events is Geoffrey's order.

the Cottonian recension is not copying the Harleian annals.⁴⁷ There must have been a St David's text from which both were derived.

At this point we must turn to the text transcribed on the flyleaves of the abbreviated Domesday Book in London, PRO, MS. E. 164/1 (King's Remembancer Misc. Books Series I), pp. 2-26 (Ab Ithel's B); for the PRO-text and the Cottonian text are closely related down to 1202. The PRO annalist also started with an Isidoran section,⁴⁸ but he saw British history as beginning with Julius Caesar,⁴⁹ and from this time on marked each year with *annus*, until s.a. 1097 he started to date from the Incarnation. Though he includes a few entries from Geoffrey, after Pope Leo's change of the date of Easter his text is closely similar to that of the Harleian annals. He gives a few entries not in the Harleian text which look as if they may be genuine early entries⁵⁰ and has some better readings than the Harleian manuscript,⁵¹ so he too seems to be copying the text from which the Harleian annals are derived. He is a much more accurate, less individualist, copier than the scribe of the Cottonian annals. The Cottonian and PRO annals are, then, independent recensions of a St David's text, and continue to be so until they part company after 1202.

From the end of the Harleian annals in 954 until 1202 it is necessary to consider the Cottonian and PRO recensions together. The original of both continues to be a St David's text. From 1040 onwards we have what seems to be a continuous list of St David's bishops.⁵² Between 954 and 1040 three obits are given merely with the title *episcopus*, but these are in Giraldus's list of St David's bishops.⁵³ Though the annals do not give a continuous list of bishops for this century they record eight attacks on St David's and there can be no doubt that we are still dealing with a St David's chronicle.

But our two manuscripts are independent derivations from a St David's original. Each records a number of events absent from the other, and, though the vocabulary is similar, the wording is not identical.⁵⁴ I give the following specimen as an example:

⁴⁷ Cotton has ten entries not in Harley, and Harley has thirty-three entries which Cotton does not give.

⁴⁸ Again, this is an addition to the St David's annals as they were in 954. The PRO Isidoran preface goes down to the reign of Leo I (457-73), so that the chronological join with the main text is very clumsy.

⁴⁹ So did Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, V.24, whose annal for 60 B.C. begins the PRO-text.

⁵⁰ 565: 'Nauigatio Gilde in Hibernia';

569: 'Sinodus Uictorie apud Britones congregatur';

649: 'Guentis strages';

880: 'Gueit Conani';

889: 'Subni Scotorum sapientissimus obiit'.

⁵¹ At 865 he has the correct reading and the Harleian annals a corrupt reading, for example.

⁵² Erfyn, Joseph, Bleddyn, Sulien, Abraham, Wilfrid, Bernard.

⁵³ Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.1, though Rhydderch seems too early there. The possibility is not to be overlooked, however, that Giraldus was himself drawing on the St David's annals.

⁵⁴ Williams Ab Ithel, *Annales Cambriae*, pp. 34-5.

Annus MCXI. Iorwert filius Bledint de carcere rediit. Owinus et Madocus filii Ririt combusserunt Meirionnith. Owinus diuertens ad Keredigeaun irruptiones fecit in Flandrenses; pro quo Cadugaun pater eius Keredigeaun amisit, et Gilberto filio Ricardi traditur. Owinus et Madocus Hiberniam petunt. Madocus rediit, et in siluis latuit.

Annus MCXII. Iorwarth a Madoco nepote suo occisus est. Owinus de Hibernia rediens terram suam a rege accepit. Mortalitas hominum maxima.

Annus: Iorwerth filius Bledin iussu regis de carcere in patriam suam rediit. Oweyn filius Cadugaun et Maredut filius Ririd combusserunt Meyronnith, hominesque ibi et armenta occiderunt. Postea Owein uenit de Keredigaun et irruptiones fecit in Flandrenses, quapropter Cadugaun eius pater Kereticam terram amisit et Gilberto filio Ricardi traditur. Ipse uero Owein et Madauc expulsi Yberniam petunt. Sed Madauc iterum de Ybernia rediit et latuit in siluis.

Annus: Jorwerth a Madauc nepote suo occiditur, et ab eodem Madauc Cadugaun suus auunculus occiditur. Interea Owein de Ybernia rediit et terram suam a rege accepit.

From 1136 to 1167 the differences of wording are much more marked, but many of the same incidents are recorded in both Latin recensions and in the vernacular recensions, the Bruts, so that the same text seems to lie behind all the manuscripts. At 1168 the two Latin recensions again become very similar. This continues until 1188. At 1189 the PRO-text begins to take on independent features, though the St David's original remains in the background until 1202. After this the texts diverge.⁵⁵

The Anglo-Normans moved into South-West Wales in the 1090s, and after this English entries in the Cottonian annals become more frequent. They are about the crusades, royal visits to Normandy and Gascony, the struggles between kings and their sons and barons, John's contest with the Church (he is *maliciosus oppressor ecclesiarum et optimatum . . . odiosus Domino et hominibus*), notices of royal births and deaths, papal councils and succession and the visits of papal legates, and a few ecclesiastical obits. These are not tacked on to the end of Welsh entries, but often take a central place. The material is commonplace, but though I have compared it with twenty-five sets of English

⁵⁵ In the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries the interest of the annals is quite widespread, concentrating especially in Dyfed, Ceredigion, and Powys. The annals are also concerned with the family of Sulien, but other than this they show no special intimacy with Llanbadarn, whereas there are fairly frequent entries about the city of St David's (between 1073, when Sulien was appointed, and 1099, when Rhigyfarch died, there are six references to St David's, other than to its clerics). It should be remembered that the *paruchia* of St David spread over Dyfed, Ceredigion, and Southern Powys. There must have been a close connexion between Llanbadarn and St David's in this period, which no doubt facilitated the transmission of news.

annals,⁵⁶ I cannot find that it is directly borrowed. The English element becomes marked from the 1160s, was present before the texts diverged after 1202, and continued sporadically throughout the St David's chronicle. I think therefore that it probably originates at St David's; but it must first have been entered as rather jumbled memoranda, perhaps from memory and not immediately, because the sequence is in some cases confused. It shows that the St David's scribes were at work in an anglicised society.

The St David's annals are really Anglo-Welsh from the 1160s onwards. In the thirteenth century they sometimes give the deaths of English lords in battle without even naming the independent Welsh ruler on the opposing side. The amount of detail about St David's grows. For example, when the annalist records a St David's appointment in the later period he sometimes supplies the string of changes which it brings about, together with precise information about the date of a man's death, the exact place of the tomb within the church, and so on. There is no doubt that the Cottonian annals remain throughout a St David's chronicle, though there are lean years when little or nothing was recorded. They are especially valuable as a source for the Anglo-Norman south-west, interested in Pembroke, the Marshall family and other Anglo-Norman lords, Carmarthen, and the St David's area.

For the period between the death of Æthelred and the coronation of King John two bifolia and one single leaf have been inserted into the Cottonian annals.⁵⁷ They are in the same hand as the main text, but were put in as an afterthought. The leaves bear rather scrappy and laconic English entries with marks to show where they were to be fitted into the main text. They are derived from John of Worcester up to 1138.⁵⁸ After this they are still derived from a Worcester text. This shows that a Worcester chronicle (or extracts from it) was available at St David's, and that the idea of combining Welsh and English entries, later to be adopted in *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, had already been conceived at St David's by the late thirteenth century, probably under the influence of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Now let us turn to Exeter Cathedral MS. 3514, and to the second of the two chronicles transcribed there.⁵⁹ This has no independent historical value, but it shows us how one Welsh annalist worked, and what sources he had at his disposal. Up to 1172 the entries are very short and scattered. From 1172 to 1265

⁵⁶ BL MS. Cotton Vespasian E.IV; the annals of Worcester, Winchester, Waverley, Tewkesbury; the *Flores Historiarum*, Roger of Wendover, the Major and Minor Chronicles of Matthew Paris, the Bury chronicle, the Peterborough chronicle, Roger of Hoveden, William of Newburgh, Ralph de Diceto, Gervase of Canterbury, Bartholomew de Cotton, Ralph of Coggeshall, Walter of Coventry, Thomas Wykes; the annals of Osney, Dunstable, Bermondsey, Burton, Southwark, and Winchcombe. Professor Christopher Cheney very kindly lent me his transcript of BL MS. Cotton Faustina B.I (Winchcombe) and discussed the English annals with me. There are some verbal similarities between the St David's annals and the Battle annals edited by Liebermann (*Anglo-normannische Geschichtsquellen*, pp. 50–5), but these stop in 1206; Brecon was a cell of Battle.

⁵⁷ Fos 142, 144, 146, 148, 150.

⁵⁸ On John of Worcester see Darlington, *Anglo-Norman Historians*. Between 1104 and 1121 there is a close association between the Cottonian Annals of St David's and the extracts from John in the Annals of Worcester (ed. Luard, *Annales Monastici*, IV.355–564, esp. 374–7).

⁵⁹ MS., pp. 523–8; edited for 1254–85 by Jones, "'Cronica de Wallia' and other documents", pp. 42–4.

they are abstracted from the Bury chronicle.⁶⁰ 1265 is where the original Bury chronicle by John of Tayster ended. From 1274⁶¹ until the annals end in 1285 they are abstracted from the St David's text. But since they leave out much of the detail about St David's this does not look like a chronicle compiled there, although the St David's annals were accessible to the scribe. We shall return to this question later.

The other chronicle in the Exeter manuscript, known as the *Cronica de Wallia*,⁶² is a much more important and interesting one. Unfortunately it does not begin until 1190. It is about Welsh Wales, especially the areas ruled by Rhys and his descendants, and it is a Cistercian document.⁶³ Up to 1216 it is closely paralleled by *Brut y Tywysogyon*. The next ten years are missing, but the entries for 1228 and 1230 have correspondences with the *Brut*. From 1231 to 1246 it is almost identical with the PRO annals, and 1248 is similar. The years 1249–53 are missing. Then from 1254 onwards the character of the entries changes, and with the exception of one entry in 1255 they are a conflation of extracts from the St David's and the Bury annals.⁶⁴ The scribe therefore seems to have used a defective manuscript, and his independent Welsh source came to an end in 1255.

There are indications that the section from 1231 to 1255 had a Strata Florida origin, though all the Strata Florida entries which we find in the PRO annals are not present. But the death of Owain son of Gruffydd is recorded in 1235, with the exact date and the information that he was buried next to his brother Rhys in the monks' chapter at Strata Florida.⁶⁵ 1236 reports, with the date (*circa festum Sancti Michelis*), a transaction of Maelgwn son of Maelgwn by which he made ready to despoil the monks of Strata Florida of Ystrad Meurig, which his ancestors had given them. This reference to monastic property in the vicinity of the monastery points clearly to Strata Florida. The annalist also mentions that the princes of Wales swore fealty to David in 1238 at Strata Florida. Mr Beverley Smith has considered and rejected the possibility that these Exeter annals were put together at Talley in Ystrad Tywi.⁶⁶ Talley

⁶⁰ Printed by Thorpe, *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, II. 151–96, as the continuation of 'Florence' of Worcester or, for the period after 1212, by Gransden (ed. & tr.), *Chronicle*. See Galbraith, 'St Edmundsbury'.

⁶¹ There are entries at 1266 and 1273, but they are not from the St David's annals as we now have them.

⁶² Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS. 3514, pp. 507–19. Edited by Jones, "'Cronica de Wallia' and other documents", pp. 29–41.

⁶³ Apart from the references to Strata Florida, it is concerned with King John's exactions as they affect the Cistercian order (see 1209).

⁶⁴ 1254 and 1255 are overlap-years. 1255 has some correspondences with PRO and the *Brut*, some extracts from the Bury annals.

⁶⁵ Rhys died in 1220, but this section is missing from *Cronica de Wallia*.

⁶⁶ Smith, 'Dynasty', p. 277, states: 'There does not appear to be any good reason to associate the *Cronica de Wallia* with Strata Florida'. But the evidence I am citing seems to me very good evidence. The only reference to Talley in the *Cronica* (and comparably in the *Brut*) is at 1214: 'Hoc anno duo Walenses episcopi Deo donante preficiuntur Meneuensi et Bangorensi ecclesiis. Geruasius uero abbas de Tallelecheu Premonstracensis ordinis sedis Meneuic, Caduganus uero abbas de Alba Domo Bangorum preficitur, uir mire facundie et sapientie.' This seems to me to show much greater intimacy with and enthusiasm for Whitland than Talley. Smith also recognises Whitland as the possible home of the *Cronica*, and prefers it.

seems impossible, for although there are several eulogies accompanying obituary notices in this part of the annals, Rhys Gryg, lord of Ystrad Tywi, does not get one (1234),⁶⁷ nor does his son Rhys Mechyll (1244). On the other hand Owain son of Gruffydd, lord of South Cardigan, who was buried at Strata Florida, does. So, more surprisingly, does Richard Marshall, earl of Pembroke.⁶⁸ In the section from 1190 to 1216 eulogies go to the Lord Rhys, sufficiently outstanding to deserve a special mention in any South-West Welsh annals, and to his sons Gruffydd and Hywel, both of whom were buried at Strata Florida.⁶⁹

There is a significant detail in the entry for 1207 which also points to Strata Florida. The earl of Gloucester then came from Buellt to devastate the land of the sons of Gruffydd. *He stayed the first night at the grange of Aberdehoneu.* Aberdehoneu was a Cistercian grange near Builth and part of the possessions of Strata Florida. This is probably why it receives mention.

I think therefore that from 1190 to 1255 these annals are from a Strata Florida source.⁷⁰ They are the nearest we can come to the Latin original of *Brut y Tywysogyon* in its earliest known version, before it became conflated with supplementary material. They are in a rhetorical style similar to that of the *Brut*. Here is a passage describing how, after Rhys had burned Radnor, Roger de Mortimer and Hugh de Sai set out their hosts against him, and how Rhys, like a lion, defeated them (A.D. 1196):

Qua combusta eadem die Rogerus de Mortuo Mari et Hugo de Sai cum maximo apparatu in ualle eiusdem uille turmas magnas bellicis armis munitissimas, acies instauratas loriceas, clipeatas, galeatas, contra Resum principem exposuerunt. Quos ut Resus uir magnanimus aspiciens manu ualida, corde audaci leonem induens, in hostes irrumpens eosdemque actutum in fugam conuertens, fugatos instanter persequens uiliter, sed uiriliter tractauit. Omnesque Marchenses tremore affecti non modico stragem ibidem factam complanxerunt.

⁶⁷ Smith (*ibid.*, pp. 262–6) argues that the *Cronica* shows a partiality for Rhys Gryg, but I do not find his arguments convincing. In 1213 *Cronica de Wallia* gives a short statement which has been very much amplified in the Peniarth 20 version of the *Brut*: it is dangerous to argue from the omissions. In 1215 the annalist says the territory was divided 'in tribus partibus licet inequalibus': he seems to think that Maelgwn gets the biggest, and cites Rhys Gryg third. Smith suggests that the *Cronica* was compiled, perhaps in Ystrad Tywi, between 1277 and 1283, when there seemed good hope that Rhys ap Maredudd might reestablish control over all Ystrad Tywi. But the derived entries for the years 1254–66 in *Cronica de Wallia* (see below, pp. 79, 85) are quite inconsistent with this kind of political motivation. Here the St David's text is fuller. *Cronica de Wallia* is giving brief extracts, and the omission of much of the detail of the St David's annals does not strike me as significant in the same way as it does Mr Smith.

⁶⁸ And, very briefly, David of Gwynedd (1246), buried at Aberconway, daughter-house of Strata Florida.

⁶⁹ And briefly to Cedifor ap Gruffydd (1206).

⁷⁰ Jones points out (*Brut y Tywysogyon* . . . Peniarth MS. 20 Version, p. xli) that the Exeter and PRO texts both omit a reference in 1248 to the settlement of a debt owed by Strata Florida to King Henry III, which the *Brutiau* say was recorded in the monastic annals. PRO seems to have a lacuna here, with no Welsh entries for 1247–50, and a very brief foreign entry for 1249. The Strata Florida part of *Cronica de Wallia* is also lacunose at this point. So I do not think that the absence of this entry argues against Strata Florida origin. The entry about the Strata Florida grange of Aberdehoneu is not in the Peniarth 20 *Brut*, which on other grounds must be a Strata Florida document.

The late thirteenth-century scribe had, then, a Strata Florida document which took him down to 1255. But he seems not to have compiled his annals at Strata Florida, because he used no Strata Florida material later than this. He had to make up with a conflation of extracts from the Bury chronicle and the St David's annals. They are the same extracts as those which appear in the second set of annals in the Exeter manuscript which I have already mentioned, and the two sets must have come from the same house. There is nothing in them to indicate which house. But the third text printed from this manuscript by Thomas Jones concerns the lords of Carew, just to the south-west of the Cistercian house of Whitland. The land for Whitland was granted by Bishop Bernard of St David's, and Strata Florida was Whitland's daughter-house. Whitland was therefore in a good position to obtain material from Strata Florida and from St David's and to show a keen interest in Welsh Wales, in the descendants of Lord Rhys and in the lords of Carew. It is impossible to prove definitely that the Exeter annals came from Whitland, but Whitland is by far the most likely place for their compilation.⁷¹

Now we turn to the most complicated of all the texts, the PRO annals. Up to 1202 they were using the St David's chronicle, but their character changes in 1189. From this time on, until 1263, they speak with the voice of independent Wales. The English are *dolosi et in omnibus fere odiosi* (1216); after a Welsh victory (1214) the Welsh returned joyful to their homes and the doleful Franks were everywhere ejected and dispersed hither and thither like birds. When Rhys son of Maelgwn died untimely in 1255, his panegyric says that people hoped he would have freed Wales from the yoke of the English. There is no doubt where the sympathies of the annalist lie.

We can best discuss the PRO annals after 1189 in four sections. In the second of these, between 1231 and 1255, four deaths or burials at Strata Florida are noted, three with dates. Maelgwn's attempt to despoil the Strata Florida monks of their property in 1236 is also recorded. This section is very similar to the *Cronica de Wallia*, which we saw had a Strata Florida source. But the first section, before 1231, is different from the *Cronica* and the *Brut*. We know from the *Brut* that two people whose obits are mentioned during this period were buried at Strata Florida, but the PRO annals do not mention the place of burial.⁷² The absence of one of these is especially notable, since later, in 1235 (in the second section), the annals say that Owain was buried in the chapter there next to his brother: but the first section had not noted the brother's burial. Nor does the first section of the PRO annals mention the incident involving the Strata Florida grange at Aberdehoneu. So the section before 1231 does not show special intimacy with Strata Florida. The PRO annals report many of the same incidents as the *Cronica de Wallia* and the *Brut*, but they seem to be using a different text, and there is a substantial amount for which there is no parallel in the *Cronica* or the *Brut*. There is,

⁷¹ This is the conclusion which Beverley Smith finally reaches. Thomas Jones stressed the Strata Florida origin of the text.

⁷² 1201, 1220.

however, quite a lot of detail about campaigns in the south-west, areas within easy reach of Whitland. The milieu of the first section is definitely Cistercian.⁷³

After the second – Strata Florida – section (1231–55) we come to the fullest and most interesting part of the PRO annals. This certainly gives the impression of contemporary reporting. The annalist writes with enthusiasm: his rhetoric is that of the Welsh nationalist. His vivid narrative moves forward purposefully, supported with convincing dates and details. Under the leadership of Llywelyn the Welsh surge on in a series of victories. Much of this section concerns events in Central Wales: Maelienydd, Arwystli, Ceri, Radnor, Elfael, Buellt. These areas are all in the neighbourhood of the Cistercian house of Cwm Hir, a daughter of Whitland. The death of Abbot Gruffydd of Cwm Hir is given, with a date, at 1261, a very unusual type of entry in the PRO annals. The events of these years are either not in the *Brut* at all, or are very differently reported there, so that the Welsh translators seem to have had quite a different text. The only mention of Strata Florida in the PRO annals during these years is the burial of David ap Hywel there in 1258, and he was a noble of Arwystli.⁷⁴

All these three sections of the PRO annals after 1189 – the first which has a good deal of material from the neighbourhood of Whitland, the second from Strata Florida, and the third which seems to be interested in Central Wales round Cwm Hir – have brief additions from English annals.⁷⁵ These are in a markedly different style from some of the Welsh entries. Look at the year 1231. There is a longish narrative account of how Llywelyn attacked Montgomery, Brecon, Hay, and Radnor, then Caerleon, Neath, Kidwelly, and Cardigan. Meanwhile the English king had taken an army to the Marches and built Painscastle. Then we have appended three brief sentences: 'Obiit Willhelmus Marescallus vii Iduum Aprilis et Ricardus frater eius factus est comes Penbrochie. Ricardus comes Cornubiae desponsavit Isabellam comitissam Gloucestriae. Henricus rex firmavit castrum Matildis.' Here the compiler does not seem to have realised that Painscastle and *castrum Matildis* are one and the same place, so he has repeated his information. In the PRO annals we are in fact dealing with a composite text, made up of material of various origins, a text at a later stage of evolution than the Strata Florida part of *Cronica de Wallia*.

The PRO compiler, for the period before 1203, took over a St David's text which already had an English element, but he proceeded to append brief entries from an English chronicle which he had beside him. Some of these are

⁷³ See 1201, 1207.

⁷⁴ There is an interesting reference to Whitland, with the date, in 1257. This describes how four Anglo-Welsh lords and their knights broke into the abbey, beat up the monks, despoiled the *conuersi*, killed the servants, and made off with some of the monastic property. But I think this could have entered the annals of a daughter-house.

⁷⁵ See, for example, PRO 1229 (cf. Vesp. E.IV and Wint.); end of PRO 1231 (cf. Vesp. E.IV, Wint.); end of PRO 1235 (cf. Vesp. E.IV); etc.

verbally identical with those in BL Cotton Vespasian E.IV,⁷⁶ a set of Winchester annals augmented at Waverley. As Liebermann has shown,⁷⁷ Vesp. E.IV was used by the Worcester annals, was descended from a lost Winchester manuscript, and is related to the extant annals of Winchester, Waverley, and Tewkesbury. The text our scribe used was not Vesp. E.IV, because he has entries which are not in Vesp. but are in the related annals, often those of Waverley.⁷⁸ There can be no doubt that the Welsh compiler had an English set of annals which probably reached him through the Cistercian house of Waverley, and which lies behind his English additions.

The contemporary narrative breaks off in 1263, right in the middle of the triumphant career of Llywelyn. The point of view completely changes. In the fourth and final section Edward is *rex illustris*. Llywelyn, the hero of the immediately preceding part, gets a very brief obituary notice in the wrong year (killed by the English, but *fraude suorum*) without a word of panegyric. There is similarly no praise for David. Llywelyn was in fact buried at Cwm Hir, so the annals can hardly have any connexion now with that house. The Waverley chronicle which had provided the additions in the earlier sections now gives the main structure of the annals. The annalist now is simply not interested in Welsh Wales, unless it is to record English victories or the submission of Welsh princes to the king.⁷⁹ He misdates the death of the great Llywelyn. Apart from Llywelyn and David, he mentions the obits of only two Welsh princes, both lords of Ystrad Tywi. Both these are wrongly dated. Maredudd son of Rhys died in 1271, not 1273, and Rhys son of Maredudd, whose obit our compiler gives in 1270, was attacking Gower as late as 1287. He must be confusing him with Rhys Fychan (son of Rhys Mechyll) who died in 1271. This section does not look as if it was written by a Welshman at all.

To interpret this evidence we have to turn to the rest of the material on the flyleaves of the Breviate Domesday. It is almost all of South Welsh interest, written in various hands, one recurring, all of the same date. They can be dated precisely by the contents to the time between 1300 and 1304. On the flyleaves following *Annales Cambriae* there is a second chronicle⁸⁰ interested

⁷⁶ PRO 1168: 'Episcopi et fere omnes magnates Angliae scripserunt domino papae contra Thomam archiepiscopum. Galfridus Foliot archiepiscopus Eboracensis ab archiepiscopo Thoma excommunicatus est.'

PRO 1173: 'Rex pater et rex filius discordes facti sunt. Comes Leicestriae captus est.'

PRO 1181: 'Philippus rex Francorum a Francia Iudeos expulit.'

PRO 1182: 'Henricus rex .xlii. millia marcarum misit Hierosolimis.'

All these are identical with Vesp. E.IV. I am most grateful to Professor Cheney for drawing my attention to this group of annals; he had already noted similarities.

⁷⁷ *Anglo-normannische Geschichtsquellen*, pp. 173–202.

⁷⁸ For example, PRO 1176: 'Pons lapideus Londoniae inceptus est.'

⁷⁹ At 1276, 1277, and 1280. Williams Ab Ithel, *Annales Cambriae*, p. 105, omits the entry for 1276 and misdates 1277. 1276 reads: 'Hoc anno uenit Paganus filius Patricii de Chauard cum magno exercitu ad uillam de Kermerdin et subiugauit domino regi Anglie totam terram de Stratewi et de Kardigan et uastauit omnia castella eiusdem patrie. Omnes barones Sudwallie Angliam intraerunt et omagium domino regi Anglie fecerunt.'

⁸⁰ London, PRO, MS. E.164/1, pp. 29–35; edited Anon., 'Chronicle of the thirteenth century'.

mainly in Glamorgan.⁸¹ After a few introductory sentences it starts in 1081 with extracts from the Annals of Margam; then in 1142 it transfers to a text similar to the Annals of Tewkesbury, but leaves them in the 1240s. After 1256 the material of Welsh interest increases in quantity. From the death of Herewald in 1104 until 1266 there is an almost complete list of the bishops of Llandaf,⁸² but these cease quite abruptly. Cistercian interests are present throughout, but after 1250 there is only one Margam entry. Neath is mentioned twice towards the end of the chronicle, in 1283 and 1289, each time with an entry referring to property. The chronicle terminates in 1298 with an entry about the betrothal of Lady Anna, daughter of William de Breose. The Cistercian abbey of Neath would be a suitable place for its compilation.⁸³

Much of the material on the rear flyleaves is a collection of evidence relating to the dispute, about the marcher-rights of the De Breose lords of Gower, which came to a head in 1299 and was not terminated until 1306.⁸⁴ The latest of the documents copied there is an *inspeximus* by William de Breose dated 6 May, 1300. But the collection does not contain the confirmation of John's charter to William de Breose by Edward on 16 October, 1304, which would almost certainly have been included, had it then been issued. Whoever ordered the compilation of this section was interested in the history of the English conquest, in Carmarthen and Gower, and especially in the De Breose family, for on pp. 481–2 there is yet another short set of annals relating directly to these subjects. Most of the material in them comes from the West Welsh annals we have been discussing, but here the entries end with Maredudd's revolt in 1287.

The hands in which these documents are copied are not practised chancery hands, but rather the kind of hands you would expect in a monastic cartulary.⁸⁵ The flyleaves also include a grant to Neath abbey by Henry II, a confirmation by Peter de Leia of St David's of grants to Neath, a grant by John de Breose to Neath, and an *inspeximus* by William de Breose of a grant to Neath. Neath was on the edge of Gower and had lands in Gower. Neath is almost certainly the place where the following texts on the flyleaves of the Breviate Domesday were transcribed: the Glamorgan chronicle compiled at Neath, the

⁸¹ Other annals relating to South-East Wales are the Annals of Margam, 1066–1232 (ed. Luard, *Annales Monastici*, I.1–40), and the annals in London, BL MS. Royal 6.B.XI, fos 105r–108r, 112r. These latter extract their entries from the Annals of Tewkesbury (more precisely than do the PRO annals) down to 1248. After this they are independent, with much detail about appointments at Llandaf. Some years are given very fully (e.g., 1256), others very meagrely. They stop in 1268. Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 48, lists this manuscript as part of the library of Cardiff, a Benedictine priory and cell of Tewkesbury, three or four miles from Llandaf. A copy of the Tewkesbury annals up to 1248 may well have reached Glamorgan through Cardiff. Both Royal 6.B.XI and the PRO annals copied them only up to the 1240s.

⁸² Of the twelve bishops between these dates only William of Saltmarsh is missing.

⁸³ J. B. Smith & T. B. Pugh, *apud* Pugh, *Glamorgan County History*, III.241, say 'almost certainly compiled at Neath or Margam'. But were it Margam, you would expect the Margam entries to increase in the later stages, not to fade out.

⁸⁴ It is discussed by Seyler, 'Early charters', and by Smith & Pugh, *apud* Pugh, *Glamorgan County History*, III.231–40.

⁸⁵ Here I am glad to quote Professor Brown's opinion.

Neath grants, the short annals concerning the English conquest and De Breose activities, the evidence about De Breose rights in Gower and the related documents.

There is a strong presumption that our West Welsh annals were also copied into the Breviate Domesday at Neath or for Neath. The scribes who put together the evidence on jurisdiction in Gower were interested in them and, largely from them, made the extracts giving the history of Carmarthen, Gower, and the De Breose family. They must have been familiar with such a technique. Rishanger says that in 1291 King Edward, trying to assert his right as superior lord, had the monastic chronicles of England, Scotland, and Wales scrutinised,⁸⁶ and the Great Roll for 1292 contains a list of relevant extracts.⁸⁷ Our manuscript is interested mainly in De Breose claims, but so it would be if the material was compiled by Neath monks rather than by the king's clerks. After 1291, annals must have been clearly recognised as not only interesting but potentially useful, and Neath could have sent to Strata Florida to borrow its annals. Or the annals could have been copied at Strata Florida for Neath and bound into the Breviate at Neath, for the vellum of the flyleaves is not nearly so well prepared as that of the main manuscript, being browner, stiffer, less carefully cut, and containing holes.⁸⁸

One entry in the annals suggests transcription either at Neath or under the auspices of Neath. Although there is no record in the annals of the foundation of Strata Florida, Whitland, or Cwm Hir, the western Cistercian houses,⁸⁹ the foundation of Neath and Tintern has been put in.⁹⁰ These entries look very odd in so predominantly West Welsh a context: but if the annals were copied at Neath their presence is explained.

The independent Welsh annals probably obtained from Strata Florida broke off at 1263. I think they may have been continued at Neath, possibly by an English scribe. This would explain the ignorance of independent Welsh affairs. Ystrad Tywi, the neighbouring Welsh kingdom, meant something to the compiler, but even here he got his facts wrong. It was this man who added the material from the Waverley chronicle, for it does not appear in the *Brut*.⁹¹

⁸⁶ Riley, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*, pp. 123–4.

⁸⁷ Rymer, *Foedera*, I/3.99–102. Cf. Stones, *Anglo-Scottish Relations*, pp. xxvi–xxvii: 'Closer study of the text shows that Edward's clerks almost certainly possessed texts of some complete chronicles'. I owe these references to Professor Cheney.

⁸⁸ The De Breose documents start on the last leaf of the Breviate and continue on pp. 474–87 on a separate gathering. The two long sets of annals are on the fore flyleaves, on gatherings separate from the Breviate, but the hand of the Glamorgan chronicle recurs in the De Breose documents at the end. When the name De Breose occurs in the text of the Breviate it has sometimes been noted in the margin. At first this is very frequent; it becomes less so and then stops altogether. According to Galbraith (*Herefordshire Domesday*, p. xxviii) the thirteenth-century PRO Breviate 'appears to be a line for line copy' of the one kept at Margam. Smith (*apud* Pugh, *Glamorgan County History*, III.620, n. 197) notes: 'The possibility must be admitted that the text itself was executed on behalf of the De Breoses'.

⁸⁹ Nor of Llantarnan, Strata Florida's daughter in Glamorgan.

⁹⁰ 1130: 'Fundata est abbatia de Neth; eodem anno fundata est abbatia de Furneis' (Furness was founded in 1127). 1131: 'Fundata est Tinterna'.

⁹¹ The burning of Strata Florida in 1286 would be of sufficient interest for a Cistercian scribe from Neath to enter. It is not in *Brut y Tywysogyon*.

We can now see how our texts evolved and what historical influences governed their development. St David's was the early centre of annalistic writing. Contemporary annals were kept here from the late eighth century on, and soon after they were started earlier sections were compiled, based on Irish annals and a northern chronicle. The Harleian annals are copied from this St David's text. Cotton Domitian A.1, itself a St David's manuscript,⁹² is based on the same St David's annals, and so are the PRO annals up to 1202.⁹³ Up to the twelfth century St David's had a wide range of interests over much of Wales: after the English conquest the annals gradually adopt an anglicised orientation and their interest in Welsh affairs is narrowed. Strata Florida started to keep annals soon after its foundation in 1164: so *Brut y Tywysogyon* indicates. The *Cronica de Wallia* in the Exeter manuscript is the earliest version now known of a Strata Florida text. It stopped in 1248, or perhaps 1255.⁹⁴ The PRO manuscript after 1189 is much the most complicated. The section from 1231 to 1255 was definitely a Strata Florida text; the parts preceding and following it, with material from Whitland and Cwm Hir, were possibly compiled there.⁹⁵ But I believe the PRO annals were transcribed at or for Neath, together with the other chronicle and the material relating to the dispute over jurisdiction in Gower. They were conflated with a Waverley chronicle and the last section may have been added by an Englishman at Neath. The Latin texts therefore show us Welsh annals at various stages of composition, in several houses, under different political influences, all earlier than the Welsh Bruts.

In this lecture I have tried very briefly to indicate how the Welsh annals were put together. Some of the problems I have not had time to deal with and some I cannot answer. I am sure, however, that if we are to reach sound conclusions we must look at all the evidence together, see the annals in their relation to each other, to other relevant material, and to English annalistic writing of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Tracking down the sources of our Welsh Latin annals is an exacting task, but if it is not done significant details and omissions will be imagined in what was just slavish copying, or a source compiled before the end of the eighth century will be seen as a contemporary fifth-century record. Parts of the Welsh Latin annals are original and contemporary, parts are rather sluggishly kept, parts are compiled long after the events from material the annalist happened to have to hand. What I have said today is the dry bones of history. But before dry bones can live, someone must collect the pieces and put together the skeleton. This is what I have tried to do.

⁹² Ker, 'Sir John Prise', pp. 21–2.

⁹³ Both these sets of annals, and especially those in the Cotton manuscript, show that Geoffrey of Monmouth was taken seriously as an historian of early Britain. See Keeler, 'Four mediaeval chroniclers'.

⁹⁴ See above, p. 77. In *Cronica de Wallia*, 1254–5 are overlap years, with one passage like the Strata Florida annals, others from St David's and the Bury chronicle.

⁹⁵ For a different view, see D. Dumville, *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977/8) 464.

APPENDIX

A synopsis of proposed stages in the development of the Annales Cambriae

1. Annals began to be kept at St David's in the late eighth century.
2. Soon after this the annals were extended backwards by drawing on the following sources: (a) Irish entries up to the end of Isidore's chronicle, (b) a northern chronicle with North Welsh entries. A few other scattered British references were added, and the annals were arranged probably now, if not in 954, in the form of a 532-year cycle.
3. It was copied out in 954 and genealogies were attached to the annals.
4. After 954 the annals were continued at St David's.
5. Circa 1100 the Anglo-Norman scribe of BL MS. Harley 3859 (origin and mediaeval provenance unknown) transcribed the text described in §3 (Ab Ithel's A).
6. Some time between 954 and 1202 someone at St David's added a preliminary Isidoran section starting at the creation of the world.
7. Annals began to be kept at Strata Florida soon after its foundation in 1164.
8. Material from Whitland, Strata Florida, and Cwm Hir was added to a version of the St David's annals which went down to 1202 (see §§ 1, 2, 4, 6). The independent material began in 1189 and ended in 1263.
9. After 1266 someone, most probably at Whitland, compiled a set of annals, using a Strata Florida text from 1190 to 1255, and conflating an abstract of the St David's annals with the Bury chronicle for the years 1254–66. This is the *Cronica de Wallia*. In the same house another set of annals was drawn up, based on extracts from the Bury chronicle down to 1265 and an abstract from the St David's annals from 1274 to 1285 (the same abstract as in the annals just mentioned). Notes were added about the sons of Rhys and the sons of William Fitzwilliam of Carew. This is all in Exeter MS. 3514.
10. A Breviate Domesday Book was copied for Neath in the second half of the thirteenth century. Some time after 1286, probably after 1291 and possibly not until 1299, the Neath monks secured the material listed in §8. One of them copied it on to what are now the flyleaves of the Breviate Domesday, conflating it with a set of annals from Waverley. He used the Waverley annals to bring his chronicle up to 1286. This is the text of the *Annales Cambriae* in PRO E.164/1, pp. 2–26 (Ab Ithel's B).
11. Between 1300 and 1304 a Glamorgan chronicle compiled at Neath and documents of De Breose interest relating to a dispute concerning the marcher-rights of the De Breose lords in Gower were copied on to the flyleaves of the Breviate Domesday at Neath.
12. In 1288 a St David's scribe made a copy of the St David's annals. He intended to continue (the *annus* for the year 1289 is entered), but never did. When he had copied the annals he inserted two bifolia and a single leaf to take extracts from a Worcester chronicle. This is the text of the *Annales Cambriae* in BL Cotton Domitian A. 1 (Ab Ithel's C).