THE ERADICATION OF *BRYTH
AND THE FATE OF THE BRITON

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1. The Missing Singular

1.a Brython*: Singular or Plural?* The word for 'Briton' in Welsh is *Brython*, with the plural form *Brythoniaid*. But as we shall see, *Brython* was originally the plural form of an *n*-stem noun that would have looked something like **Bryth* in the singular. This would have been parallel to such forms as the Middle Welsh singular *Seis* 'English man' with its plural *Saesson* 'English people' (Modern Welsh *Sais/Saeson*).[1]

As we find in Old English documents, the Anglo-Saxon version of the plural form is *Bret/Bryt/Brit*, without the *n*.[2] This represents the oldest form that the Anglo-Saxons would have heard and clearly indicates that Welsh had not yet adopted *Brython* as the basic, singular form.[3]

So what happened to the original singular? It could not have disappeared by some general change among the *n*-stem nouns, for the change did not occur among the rest. Indeed, the singular form was not simply lost -- it was deliberately eradicated.

1.b The Change in the Armes Prydein *Manuscript.* The evidence for the eradication of the singular form is perhaps most obvious in the long vaticinatory poem *Armes Prydein* (The Prophecy of Britain), composed in Old Welsh around 930 CE. The extant copy in the Peniarth manuscript dates only from around 1325 and is thus in the Middle Welsh period.[4]

Fortunately, the scribes transmitting *Armes Prydein* were not poets and simply copied the material, updating grammar, words, and spellings but not attempting to repair the damage these changes made on the meter of the poem. They have thus provided us with a window (albeit it a rather distorted window) through which we can view the original tenth-century Old Welsh.

The original poem was composed in the meter *Cyhydedd Naw Ban* 'nine peak line', with five syllables in the first half-line and four in the second.[5] Regular, patterned deviations from this meter hence alert us to spellings, forms, and poetic devices in Old Welsh that were not found in the Middle Welsh of the scribes.[6]

The three occurrences of *Brython* in *Armes Prydein* are all clearly plural, and this is quite in keeping with the twelve occurrences of the plural *Saesson* 'English people', as opposed to the one occurrence of the singular *Seis* 'English man', and with the fourteen occurrences of the plural *Kymry* 'Cambrians' to the one occurrence of the singular *Kymro* 'Cambrian'.[7] However, two of the three lines with *Brython* are problematic.

Line 12 *Atporyon uyd Brython pan dyorfyn* 'The Britons will rise again (?) when they prevail (?)'[8] violates the meter with one extra syllable in the first half-line. The meter would be salvaged, though, if the form *Brython* could be reduced to a monosyllabic singular used in the generic sense.[9]

It is, however, the verb that indicates that *Brython* must have been inserted to replace a (monosyllabic) singular form. Normally, "In the Brit. languages from the earliest period the verb stands in the 3rd. sg. when it precedes even a plur. subject (except when the subject is a pers. pron.)"[10] The author of *Armes Prydein*, however, observed an interesting variant to this rule: Plural proper noun subjects take the plural form of the verb.[11] With singular/plural pairs such as *Kymro/Kymry* 'Cambrian/Cambrians' or *Gwydel/Gwydyl* 'Irish man/Irish people' a singular verb with a plural noun could argue against the particular rule or it could reflect an earlier singular and a scribal error; but since singular and plural have the same number of syllables, we simply cannot tell.[12]

However, a plural verb with the plural noun corroborates the particular rule (since it violates the general rule), and it occurs with *Kymry* very consistently in lines 54, 82, 141, and 178; and with *Gwydyl* in line 177. In all other instances of the words, they are simply not the subject of a clause with a verb, and we cannot tell anything.

Another informative practice is found with the plural *Saesson* 'English people'. If the general rule were used, then a plural verb could only occur with the monosyllabic third person plural pronoun *hwy* 'they'. Since the pronoun is monosyllabic and the plural noun is disyllabic, a scribal error of writing the noun for an original pronoun (that is, following the general rule only) would be reflected in the meter. In every instance, the plural *Saesson* is the subject of a plural verb -- lines 54, 60, 90, and 101. Of these lines, the first three adhere exactly to the *Cyhydedd Naw Ban* meter -- a far better adherence rate than the rest of the poem. Indeed, line 54 demands the particular rule, for it contains a compound subject *Kymry a Saesson*.

Now that the particular rule is established, let us return to the line in question. Here we find that the subject *Brython* coincides not with the plural, but with the singular form *uyd* 'will be'. Thus, the original subject had to have been a monosyllabic singular. Since the scribe making the change would not have been aware of the rule consistently observed by the poet, he would not have known to change the verb from singular to plural. After all, the scribe simply observed the general rule on subject/verb agreement.

Of no less interest is line 42 -- *y dilein gwlat Vrython a Saesson yn anhed* 'to destroy the land of the Britons, and the Saxons (to be) occupying it' (Williams, pp. 4 & 5). Williams (p. 35) suggests that the *y* can be removed as a later scribal addition, although it appears more likely that the extra syllable would come in the second half-line (perhaps through a rearrangment of the line). Nonetheless, this still leaves two too many syllables. Here, reducing *Vrython* (a mutation of *Brython*) to a monosyllabic singular would correct the first half-line only. If *Brython* were to be made singular though, *Saesson* 'Saxons' would also have to be made singular as *Seis* for the sentence to make sense. That would reduce the length of the second half-line appropriately to the meter.

Thus we see that by reducing the plural *Saesson* to the singular generic *Seis* and the plural *Brython* to a singular generic monosyllabic noun, we restore the line to the proper *Cyhydedd Naw Ban* meter. For some reason, a scribe copying the poem felt so compelled to change the singular form to the plural *Brython* that he accepted the necessity of changing *Seis* to *Saesson* (which he was not obliged to do in line 96, where it appears without *Brython*) and thence the necessity of creating an extremely long line -- one obviously out-of-place in the poem.

This rather transparent change to the manuscript also gives us a tentative range of time for the change -- sometime between 930 and 1325.[13] This date is also corroborated by the Old English form *Bret* in contrast to the Middle English form *Breton*.

2. The Singular

2.a The Form of the Singular. The original form of the singular word for 'Briton' is rather easy to reconstruct, both from contemporary Latin records and from the history of the Welsh language.

In Medieval Latin, the singular form was *Brito*, and the plural was *Britones*.[14] This follows the routine third-declension *n*-stems in Latin that provide us with such forms as the singular *ratio* 'reckoning' and the plural *rationes* (whence such English pairs as *ratio* and *rations*).

Linguists working with the history of the Welsh language agree that the original British/Brythonic word must have been *Brittō.[15] Around the middle or second half of the sixth century, three changes occurred: (1) The endings all disappeared, providing *Britt*; (2) the geminate -*tt*- changed to the fricative -*th*- [þ], yielding the form *Brith*; and (3) the *i* [i] changed to *y* [ï].[16] Thus, the singular would have been *Bryth*.

There is nothing inherent in the singular/plural pair *Bryth/Brython* that would justify the singular's disappearing. Nor is there anything in the morphological form of *Bryth* itself that would have caused scribes to eradicate it. The problem then must have lain in the meaning of this form. There must have been a competing form already applied to a people so inimicable to the Britons that the very word the Britons used to describe themselves had to be expurgated from the literature.

2.b The Picts and the Britons. As we shall see in section 2.c, it would appear as though these people were Picts -- or at least people designated as Picts by the British. The original Picts, however, had actually been inhabitants of the island as long as or longer than the Britons, and their original name reveals a history of extremely close identity with the island and with their neighbors to the south.[17]

The antiquity and the "Britishness" of these original Picts was recognized in the Welsh language itself. The name of the vaticinatory poem giving the fate of Wales is *Armes Prydein* 'The Prophecy of Britain', and the island itself was designated throughout the Middle Ages as *Ynys Prydein* 'The Island of Britain'. Yet, the word *Prydein* 'Britain' is far closer to *Pryden* 'Picts' than it is to *Brython* 'Britons' (properly as a plural).

The fact is that in spite of romantic notions of exotic, even non-Indo-European origins for the Picts,[18] their name is very closely tied to the island and to their southern neighbors, the Britons. Not only is the name for Britain basically a name for Pictland, but the development of the names of both peoples indicate an intimate, if not identical origin.

Perhaps the most obvious difference between the names *Pryden* and *Brython* is between the *P*- and the *B*-. This, however, is actually a very minor issue, for the two sounds have been frequently interchanged in the history of the language. Morris Jones (pp. 5-6) points out concerning the Picts, "They kept in their own name the *P*- which also survives in W. *Prydain* 'Britain', and so came to be distinguished from the Southern Britons, who called themselves Brittones."

Actually, the more significant difference between *Brython* and *Pryden* lies in the medial consonants *th* [þ] and *d* [d]. Even this difference, however, goes back to what was obviously a dialect variation between a long or double *tt* and a short or single *t*.[19] As mentioned above, the *tt* underwent a process known as provection into *th*. Linguistically, this is the strengthening or lengthening of a consonant resulting here in a fricative [þ]. Around the same time, the *t* between vowels underwent the opposite process of lenition, or the weakening of a consonant.[20]

However the changes may have occurred though, we can readily see that *Brython* and *Pryden* are very closely related indeed. Moreover, we can also see that they are the source for Latin *Britannia*, with the *B* frequently interchanged with *P* and with the *t* from the ancestor of *Pryden*. This once again shows that the Britons saw a close connection between their land *Prydein* and the Picts -- the *Pryden*.

2.c The Painted Picts. One rather significant cultural similarity between the Britons and the Picts lay in their practice of painting themselves, at least before battle.[21] As for the Picts, their Latin name (from which the English name is derived) is *Picti* 'the painted ones'. As the Latin civilization of the British suppressed the practice of body painting, the designation *Picti* would have been used to differentiate between the "civilized" Britons within the Empire and the painted Britons beyond the wall.

The appropriate Welsh adjective for someone thus painted would be *brith*. This brings us very close to the suggested singular for *Brython* -- **Bryth*. As it were, the *y* derived from just such an *i* in the sixth century, as can be seen in the pre-sixth-century Latin spelling *Britannia*. Due to a rule of Welsh pronunciation though, the *y* in *Brython* is pronounced with the tongue in the mid central (rest) position [ə], and there is no danger at all of the word *brith* with its high front *i* [i] being confused with *Brython*.

As for **Bryth*, on the other hand, there was and is a great danger of confusion with *brith*. The *y* in this position is a high central vowel [ï], just slightly behind the high front vowel *i* [i]. The fact that both vowels are pronounced short keeps the *y* [ï] from being fully distinguished from the *i* [i] in normal flowing speech. Indeed, even in the more precise long pronunciation, southern Welsh dialects do not distinguish between the two, but pronounce both as *î* [i:].

In its most basic meaning of 'speckled', there is also nothing particularly offensive about the word *brith*. With humans, this would mean 'freckled, painted, having markings on the skin (natural or artificial)', which in itself would not arouse the intensity of feeling that evidently accompanied the word **Bryth* sometime after 930 CE.

In its more particular meaning with reference to the Picts, however, the word is far more charged. This word was *Brithwr* (plural *Brithwyr*), the precise translation of Latin *Pictus* 'painted man' (plural *Picti*). Certainly, the word *Brithwr* was used for Pict in this way in *The Black Book of Carmarthen*: *Ami discoganaue kindiguet. Brithon dros saesson brithuir aemet* 'And I foretell / that before the end / the Brythons / will have the measure of the English, / the old Picts shall rule'.[22]

The question now is this: How did a word referring to a people so closely related to the Britons come to be such anathema to the Britons that they would have had to eradicate their own name -- to alter their self identity?

3. Picts and Pirates

3.a Early Relations with the Picts. In spite of their common heritage, the Britons and the Picts did not always enjoy good relations. Especially during the period of Saxon ascendancy, the northern Britons were faced with the prospect of fending off the Saxons from the south while fighting the Picts to the north. However, this enmity did not appear to be so unusual as to bring about the degree of anathema associated with the name **Bryth*. Certainly, the word survived the

hatred of the Britons even after the composition of *Armes Prydein* -- sometime after which the word **Bryth* had to be expurgated from the manuscripts.

3.b The Invasion of the Gaelic Scoti. Actually, the *Brythwyr* who often fought against the Britons during the period of the Saxon ascendancy were not the same people as the *Pryden*. During the sixth century, Irish Gaelic peoples known in Latin as *Scoti* invaded Pictland and established Scotland. The domination of Pictland by the Scots began in the south, so that these Gaels were the Britons' northern neighbors from early on in the conquest period.[23]

Not only did they obtain Pictland and subjugate the Pictish people, but these Scots also acquired the name that the Britons had come to use for the inhabitants of the region. Again, this was a translation of *Pictus* from Latin -- *Brithwr*. While the Scots probably did not paint themselves, they were called *Brithwyr*; and the name underwent its first departure from the original meaning of 'the painted ones'.

3.c The Period of Gaelic Piracy. The second departure came from the behavior of these *Brithwyr* -- the Scottish 'Picts' without paint. Gaelic incursions into Wales from Ireland and now from Scotland were commonplace throughout this period of the Dark Ages. Sometimes, they involved actual settlements, but they were usually (at least interpreted as) raids on Cambrian farmsteads and villages. Such raids were probably in the tradition of the Gaelic cattle raid -- an imposed tribute to establish a claim of sovereignty.[24]

Whatever the reason for the settlements and raids from the standpoint of the Scots, the Cambrians were sorely oppressed by them -- their farmsteads and villages plundered, their people killed or enslaved. In the eyes of the Cambrians, these *Brithwyr* were pirates, thieves, and murderers.

It is from this context of history that the name *Brithwr* comes to mean 'oppressor, plunderer, pirate'.[25] Thus, the word that had been a translation of Latin *Pictus* 'painted one' and used for the Britons north of the wall and still observing non-Roman ("uncivilized") British customs came to be applied first to the Scots (Irish) Gaelic invaders and rulers of Pictland and then to Gaelic pirates with their despicable behavior.

3.d The Scandinavian Vikings. Still, the word was not such anathema to the Cambrians that the singular **Bryth* for 'Briton' could not be used around 930 CE in *Armes Prydein*. That development took yet one more departure in meaning for the word *Brithwr* -- a departure that involved Scandinavian Vikings and principles of morphology.

First, the Vikings supplanted the Gaels as the oppressors, plunderers, and pirates associated with the word *Brithwr*. These people brought a new degree of alienness to the word: The first *Brithwyr* had been the closely related Picts; the second had been the more distantly related Gaels; and now this third group was Germanic -- as alien as the Saxon overlords and about as alien as a Cambrian would care to imagine.

The alien nature of the Scandinavian Vikings and the brutality of their raids affected not only the anathema associated with the word *Brithwr*, but also the very nature of the word's first or root morpheme -- the word *brith* 'speckled, painted'. Since the morpheme *-wr* (from *gŵr* 'man') means 'one who is, one connected with', the word *Brithwr* would mean 'one who is *brith*'. Since a *Brithwr* was an 'oppressor, plunderer, pirate' and no longer had any connection with the *Pictus* (either from Pictland or from Scotland), the word *brith* naturally came to be associated only with this type of behavior.

This final stage in the development of *Brithwr* from *Pictus* is seen in several other words as well. In addition to such compounds as *brithdir* 'land or soil of medium quality or of variegated character' from *brith* + *tir* 'land' and *brithlas* 'mottled green' (glas 'green, blue, gray'), we find words relating to such despicable people as a *brithwas* 'wretch, nave' (*gwas* 'lad') or a *brithleidr* 'mean, despicable thief' (*lleidr* 'robber').[26] The meaning of *brith* in such compounds is clearly derived from the behavior of the *Brithwyr*.

Thus, *Brithwr* lost its affiliation with Britain (through the Picts and Scots) and became associated with aliens of a kind the Britons had long fought and with whom they had never atoned. At the same time, the acts of these people reached a level of brutality inconsistent with the Britons' image of themselves -- they could not bear to be connected with it.

4. Conclusion: The End of the *Bryth*

4.a The Sacrifice of Identity. As we have seen above, the word *brith* 'speckled, painted' and the name *Bryth* the reconstructed singular for *Brython* 'Britons' -- were and still are so close in pronunciation that they could easily be confused. Indeed, they are homophones in southern dialects and in all but the most careful (or disconnected) speech in northern dialects.

As *brith* became identified as the defining characteristic of a *Brithwr*, something had to change. Either *Brithwr* had to revert to its original definition of 'Pict' (with a meaning 'the painted one' that the Britons had probably long since forgotten) and a new name had to be found for the marauders, or the Britons had to change the very name by which they identified themselves.

So intense was the feeling against the Vikings that the Welsh word for 'Briton' *Bryth* had to go. In place of the singular, they adopted the plural form *Brython* with its distinctively different vowel, and they added a plural ending to that form to create a new plural.

Nor were they content simply to change current references to *Bryth*; but they went back and "rewrote history," altering such works as *Armes Prydein* to excise the hated word. Indeed, it doubtless did not bother the scribe who changed *Armes Prydein* that the changes would greatly violate the meter of the poem. It was far better to violate the meter of a poem than to suggest that the Britons had anything in common with the hated Vikings.

Of course, it certainly made the change easier for the scribes that they were identifying themselves by this time not as Britons so much as Cambrians -- *Kymry*.[27] Nonetheless, they did identify with the Britons and recognized that the *Brythoniaid* of the literature from the Dark Ages were indeed the *Kymry* of the early Middle Ages (even when, as in the case of the *Gododdin* of *Canu Aneirin*, this identity might not have been technically correct).[28]

As we see from the metrical residue of *Bryth* in *Armes Prydein* and the singular nature of *Brython* in Middle Welsh, the change took place sometime after 930 CE. Indeed, Viking activities with raids and even encroachments and settlements on the coast did not abate until the eleventh century.[29] Of course, the change had quite possibly already begun before 930, at least in some dialects. Moreover, the poet could have been composing from an earlier document and simply incorporated an archaic word *Bryth* into his poem, paying more attention to meter than to meaning.[30]

4.b The Resurrection of the Brit. It is a strange coincidence that as the shortened, singular form of *Brython* became a pejorative in Welsh, the shortened form of Briton is now a pejorative in

English -- Brit. Indeed, this is quite close to the original *Brittō, the descendant of which had to be eradicated because of its association with the Viking pirates.

Of course, one can use Brit as a form of identification, but only in carefully marked expressions of endearment (as one might say "John, you old pirate!" with exaggerated intonation). Or it can be used as a mark of defiance: A Briton could certainly say, "What's wrong with 'Brits'? I'm a Brit!"

On the other hand, no Cambrian during the time of the Scandinavian raids of the Dark Ages and the early Middle Ages could have brought himself to say the equivalent of *Bryth ydwyf i!*, for it would have been heard not as 'I'm a Brit!', but as 'I'm a person who behaves like a Viking pirate!' -- with all of the meanings and connotations associated with the hated people and their acts of violence.

This, then, was the last, the greatest, and the most enduring victim of the period of Scandinavian Viking piracy -- the very "Brit" himself.

NOTES

[1]On *n*-stem nouns and on the plural *Brittones*, see John Morris Jones, *A Welsh Grammar: Historical and Comparative, Phonology and Accidence* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), pp. 201-202.

[2]See, for example, James W. Bright, *Bright's Anglo-Saxon Reader*, revised and enlarged by James R. Hulbert (New York: Henry Holt, 1953), pp. 101, 260.

[3]The singular *Briton* in Modern English comes from later forms, such as Middle English Breton.

[4]On the dating of the manuscript, see especially Ifor Williams (ed.), *Armes Prydein: The Prophecy of Britain from the Book of Taliesin*, English version by Rachel Bromwich (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1972).

[5]Williams, *Armes Prydein*, p. lii.

[6]For example, the "mesotomic syllable" was discovered through just such patterned deviations. Whenever two identical vowels occur in adjacent syllables before the final accented syllable, they count as a single long syllable, "cut through the middle" by a consonant. This device occurs with remarkable patterned regularity. Moreover, it clearly indicates that the original language was indeed Old Welsh, for only the accent pattern of this stage of the language would have supported the device. See Toby D. Griffen, "Mesotomic Syllables in *Armes Prydein*," *Language Sciences* 15 (1993), pp. 91-106 (special issue on *The Linguistics of Welsh Literature*, ed. by T.D. Griffen), or the much longer, more thorough treatment in *The Last Battle of the Gododdin: The Hidden Poem in* Armes Prydein (Felinfach: Llanerch, 2001).

[7]The pair *Kymro/Kymry* is more problematic than *Seis/Saesson*. While the use of the wrong number is obvious from violations to the meter in the latter (as we see directly), the use of singular for plural or of plural for singular is not reflected in the meter for the former.

[8]Williams, *Armes Prydein*, pp. 2 & 3 - translation by Rachel Bromwich in the text.

[9]That is, using the singular form for the general, plural meaning. For example, one might say "The Saxon is at the door" for an approaching army. The complement *atporyon* is the plural form of *atpawr* 'remnant, remainder, leavings'. Williams (pp. 22-23) accepts this as evidence that *Brython* is used here in the plural. It is not clear, however, how the original author would have interpreted the generic singular -- whether indeed the complement should be singular (for

morphological reasons) or plural (for semantic reasons -- an issue not entirely unrelated to the use of the plural in such constructions as "The government are fools"). Certainly, as we see below, his noun/verb number agreement is somewhat idiosyncratic. For the meter, of course, the most felicitous arrangement would be the latter.

[10]Henry Lewis and Holger Pedersen, *Concise Comparative Celtic Grammar*, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), p. 269.

[11]We can call such a rule a particular rule -- applying with this particular writer. The general rule states that all noun subjects, proper and common alike, take the singular form of the verb.

[12]Such as in lines 125, 127, and 192 where *Kymry* is the subject of a singular verb. Once the rule is established and accepted (and that should occur in the next paragraphs), then we can go back and amend *Kymry* to the generic *Kymro* in these lines.

[13]Actually the change was probably effected well before the date of the Peniarth manuscript. As we see in section 4.a, the change becomes much less likely after the eleventh century.

[14]See, for example, *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Glasgow: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 279 (p. 1114). Of course, in Classical Latin (as used, for example, by Julius Caesar) the singular was *Britannus* and the plural *Britanni*.

[15]See, for example, John Morris Jones, *A Welsh Grammar*, p. 4.

[16]This follows the chronology established by Kenneth H. Jackson*, Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1953).

[17]This is a point addressed at some length by Williams (*Armes Prydein*, pp. 21-22).

[18]Perhaps the most far-fetched of such arguments can be found in Norma Lorre Goodrich, *Guinevere* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991).

[19]The first variant survives (or has been resurrected) in the name Brittany, and the second in the name Britain -- regions inhabited by the very same people, as we know from recorded history. In fact, in reconstructing the word for 'Britons' (with some Latin influence), the authors of *Brut y Tywysogyon* ('The Chronicle of the Princes') in the *Red Book of Hergest* refer in the opening entry to *Bryttanyeit* and to *Brytanyeit* -- see Thomas Jones (ed*.), Brut Y Tywysogyon or The Chronicle of the Princes* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), p. 2.

[20]While these strengthenings and weakenings may seem rather mysterious, they simply derive in Welsh from an increase or a reduction in aspiration as required in the phonetic environment. The process is explained in detail in Toby D. Griffen, *Aspects of Dynamic Phonology* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1985), chapters 5 & 7.

[21]The most famous reference to this practice is the one by Julius Caesar in Book V (§14) of his *De bello gallico*: "All the Britons dye their bodies with woad, which produces a blue colour and gives them a wild appearance in battle" (Julius Caesar: *The Battle for Gaul*, trans. by Anne and Peter Wiseman, Boston: Godine, 1980, p. 94).

[22]Text and translation from Meirion Pennar, *The Black Book of Carmarthen* (Felinfach: Lanerch, 1989), pp. 84, 96. The use of *Brythwyr* to refer to what must be intended as British Picts related to the Brython clearly shows the antiquity of the source. As such, it corroborates the early date of the Black Book suggested in the use of names -- see Toby D. Griffen*, Names from the Dawn of British Legend* (Felinfach: Lanerch, 1994), chapter 4. On this point, we should also compare the Myrddin poem *Y Cyfoesi* in Ifor Williams (ed*.), "Y Cyfoesi a'r Afallennau yn Peniarth 3," Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 4 (1928), pp. 112-129, with special reference to line 137 (p. 117).

[23]See especially Nora K. Chadwick, *Celtic Britain* (New York: Praeger, 1963), chapter 3.

[24]This point was quite effectively demonstrated by Jennifer McKnight (University of Hawaii at Manoa) in her paper "When is a pirate not a pirate? When he is ashore -- a reconsideration of 'piracy' in the Early Irish Seas and its possible implications," delivered before the Celtic Association of North America, Annual Conference, April 9, 1994, University of Georgia at Athens.

[25]This is the basic meaning in *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, vol. 1 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 328.

[26]For all of these terms, see *Geiriadur Prifygol Cymru*, vol. 1 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 327.

[27]This we see in *Armes Prydein* itself, with its three references to Briton(s) and its fifteen references to Cambrian(s).

[28]See, for example, Kenneth H. Jackson, *The Gododdin: The Oldest Scottish Poem* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1969), p. 5. Of course, while the Gododdin would not have technically been Cambrian, they were certainly even less Scottish.

[29]Compare, for example, David Walker, *Medieval Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 7. While there may have been alliances, as Walker notes, these would probably not have lessened the effects of Viking devastation within Wales.

[30]A highly conjectural alternative to the poet's use of *Bryth* can be deduced from Williams' footnote on pp. xx-xxi. If the coins had indeed belonged to a Viking envoy who had come to Bangor to seek the help of Gwynedd against Athelstan, if this had been the stimulus for *Armes Prydein*, and if the poet wanted to show as a matter of policy that the Cambrians were indeed related with the Vikings, then the use of the archaic term for 'Briton' might make diplomatic sense. However, there are rather too many "ifs" involved in this conjecture to be supported by a handful of coins.