

# Madoc

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For other uses, see [Madoc \(disambiguation\)](#).

**Madoc** or **Madog ab Owain Gwynedd** was, according to folklore, a [Welsh](#) prince who sailed to [America](#) in 1170, over three hundred years before [Christopher Columbus](#)'s voyage in 1492. According to the story, he was a son of [Owain Gwynedd](#) who took to the sea to flee internecine violence at home. The legend evidently evolved out of a medieval tradition about a Welsh hero's sea voyage, only allusions to which survive. However, it attained its greatest prominence during the [Elizabethan era](#), when English and Welsh writers made the claim that Madoc had come to the Americas as a ploy to assert prior discovery, and hence legal possession, of North America by the [Kingdom of England](#).<sup>[1]</sup> The story remained popular in later centuries, and a later development asserted that Madoc's voyagers had intermarried with local [Native Americans](#), and that their Welsh-speaking descendents still lived somewhere on the American frontier. These "Welsh Indians" were accredited with the construction of a number of natural and man-made landmarks throughout the [American Midwest](#), and a number of white travelers were inspired to go look for them.

The Madoc story has been the subject of much speculation in the context of possible [pre-Columbian trans-oceanic contact](#). However, no historical or archaeological proof of such a man or his voyages has been found in the New or Old World. Still, it has provided fertile inspiration for generations of poets and novelists, and cultural historians.

## Background

Madoc's purported father, [Owain Gwynedd](#), was a real [prince of Gwynedd](#) during the 12th century and is widely considered one of the greatest Welsh rulers of the [Middle Ages](#). His reign was fraught with battles with other Welsh princes and with [Henry II of England](#). At his death in 1170, a bloody dispute broke out between his heirs [Dafydd](#), [Maelgwn](#), and [Rhodri](#). Owain had at least 13 children from his two wives and several more children born out of wedlock but legally acknowledged under Welsh tradition. According to the legend, Madoc and his brother [Rhirid](#) were among them, though no contemporary record attests to this.

The story claims that Madoc was disheartened by this fighting, and he and Rhirid set sail from Llandrillo ([Rhos-on-Sea](#)) in the [cantref](#) of [Rhos](#) to explore the western ocean with a small fleet of boats. They discovered a distant and abundant land where one hundred men disembarked to form a colony, and Madoc and some others returned to Wales to recruit settlers. After gathering ten ships of men and women the prince sailed west a second time, never to return. Madoc's landing place has been suggested to be west [Florida](#) or [Mobile Bay, Alabama](#), in the [United States](#).

Although the folklore tradition acknowledges that no witness ever returned from the second colonial expedition to report this, the story continues that Madoc's colonists traveled up the vast

river systems of [North America](#), raising structures and encountering friendly and unfriendly tribes of [Native Americans](#) before finally settling down somewhere in the [Midwest](#) or the [Great Plains](#).

## Welsh Indians

George Catlin thought the Mandan bull boat to be similar to the Welsh [coracle](#)

A later development combined the story of Madoc's voyage with a colonial legend that an [Indian](#) tribe speaking a European language existed somewhere on the American frontier. In the early tales, the white Indians' specific language ranged from [Irish](#) to [Portuguese](#), and the tribe's name varied from teller to teller (often, the name was unattested elsewhere). However, later versions settled on [Welsh](#), and connected the tribe to the descendants of Madoc's settlers.

On November 26, 1608, Peter Wynne, a member of Captain [Christopher Newport](#)'s exploration party to the villages of the Eastern [Siouan Monacan](#) above the falls of the [James River](#) in [Virginia](#), wrote a letter to [John Egerton](#), informing him that some members of Newport's party believed the pronunciation of the Monacans' language resembled "Welch", which Wynne spoke, and asked Wynne to act as interpreter.[2] The Monacan were among those non-Algonquian tribes collectively referred to by the Algonquians as "Mandoag". Another early settler to claim an encounter with a Welsh-speaking Indian was the Reverend Morgan Jones, who told [Thomas Lloyd](#), [William Penn](#)'s deputy, that he had been captured in 1669 by a tribe of [Tuscarora](#) called the Doeg. According to Jones, the chief spared his life when he heard Jones speak Welsh, a tongue he understood. Jones' report says that he then lived with the Doeg for several months preaching the [Gospel](#) in Welsh and then returned to the [British Colonies](#) where he recorded his adventure in 1686. Gwynn Williams comments "This is a complete farrago and may have been intended as a hoax".[3]

Madoc's proponents believe [earthen fort mounds](#) at [Devil's Backbone](#) along the [Ohio River](#) to be the work of [Welsh](#) colonists[4]

Several later travelers claimed to have found the Welsh Indians, and one even claimed the tribe he visited venerated a copy of the Gospel written in Welsh. Stories of Welsh Indians became popular enough that even [Lewis and Clark](#) were ordered to look out for them. Folk tradition has long claimed that a site now called "Devil's Backbone" about fourteen miles upstream from [Louisville, Kentucky](#), was once home to a colony of Welsh-speaking Indians. Eighteenth-century [Missouri River](#) explorer [John Evans](#) of [Waunfawr](#) in Wales took up his journey in part to find the Welsh-descended "Padoucas" or "Madogwys" tribes.

There have been suggestions that the wall of [Fort Mountain](#) in [Georgia](#) owes its construction to a race of what the [Cherokee](#) termed "moon-eyed people" because they could see better at night than by day. (A competing tradition claims that the wall was built by [Hernando de Soto](#) to defend against the [Creek](#) Indians around 1540.[5]) Archaeologists believe the stones were placed there by Native Americans.[6] These "moon-eyed people," who were said to have fair skin, blonde hair and opalescent eyes, have often been associated with Prince Madoc and his Welsh band.[7]

[Benjamin Smith Barton](#) proposed that these "moon-eyed people" who "could not see in the day-time" may have been an [albino](#) race.[8] [John Haywood](#) also mentioned the legend in his *The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee* although the latter work was an effort to prove that the native tribes of [Tennessee](#) were descendants of ancient [Hebrews](#). [9]

There is also a theory that the "Welsh Caves" in [Desoto State Park](#), northeastern [Alabama](#), were built by Madoc's party, since local native tribes were not known to have ever practiced such stonework or excavation as was found on the site. [10]

The legend of the Welsh Indians was apparently not restricted to whites; in 1810, [John Sevier](#), the first [governor](#) of Tennessee, wrote to his friend Major [Amos Stoddard](#) about a conversation he had had in 1782 with the old [Cherokee](#) chief [Oconostota](#) concerning ancient fortifications built along the [Alabama River](#). The chief allegedly told him that the forts had been built by a white people called "Welsh", as protection against the ancestors of the [Cherokee](#), who eventually drove them from the region. [11] Sevier had also written in 1799 of the alleged discovery of six skeletons in brass armor bearing the Welsh coat-of-arms.

Eventually, the legend settled on identifying the Welsh Indians with the [Mandan](#) people, who differed strikingly from their neighbors in culture, language, and appearance. The painter [George Catlin](#) suggested the Mandans as descendants of Madoc and his fellow voyagers in *North American Indians* (1841); he found the round Mandan Bull Boat similar to the Welsh [coracle](#), and he thought the advanced architecture of Mandan villages must have been learned from Europeans (advanced North American societies such as the [Mississippian](#) and [Hopewell cultures](#) were not well known in Catlin's time). Supporters of this theory have drawn links between Madoc and the Mandan mythological figure [Lone Man](#), who, according to one tale, provided his people with homes during and after a great deluge.

## Sources of the legend

The Madoc story evidently originated in medieval romance. There are allusions to what may have been a sea voyage tale akin to [The Voyage of Saint Brendan](#), but no detailed version of it survives. The earliest certain reference appears in a [cywydd](#) by the Welsh poet [Maredudd ap Rhys](#) (fl. 1450-83) of [Powys](#), which mentions a Madog who is a son or descendant of Owain Gwynedd and who voyaged to the sea. The poem is addressed to a local squire, thanking him for a fishing net on a patron's behalf. Madog is referred to as "Splendid Madog... / Of Owain Gwynedd's line, / He desired not land... / Or worldly wealth but the sea." [12] There are also claims that the Welsh poet and genealogist [Gutun Owain](#) wrote about Madoc before 1492. However, Gwyn Williams in *Madoc, the Making of a Myth*, makes it clear that Madoc is not mentioned in any of Gutun Owain's surviving manuscripts.

The story may also have been known on the continent. In the introduction to the [Middle Dutch](#) poem [Van den vos Reynaerde](#) (*About Reynard the Fox*), the author Willem mentions that he had previously written a work called *Madoc*. This does not survive, but a number of subsequent Dutch writers refer to it. Willem's *Madoc* was possibly an adaptation of the Welsh Madoc story,

though many of the later mentions associate the hero with a dream, perhaps instead identifying it as [dream literature](#).

The Madoc legend attained its greatest prominence during the [Elizabethan era](#), when Welsh and English writers used it to bolster [British](#) claims in the [New World](#) versus those of [Spain](#). The earliest surviving full account of Madoc's voyage, as the first to make the claim that Madoc had come to America, appears in [Humphrey Llwyd](#) 1559 *Cronica Walliae*, an English adaptation of the *Brut y Tywysogion*.<sup>[13]</sup> The story soon became hugely popular. A [Title Royal](#) was submitted to Queen Elizabeth in 1580 which stated that "The Lord Madoc, sonne to [Owen Gwynned](#), Prince of [Gwynedd](#), led a Colonie and inhabited in [Terra Florida](#) or thereabouts" in 1170.<sup>[1]</sup> An account of Madoc's story appears in [George Peckham](#)'s *A True Report of the late Discoveries of the Newfound Landes* (1583). It was picked up in [David Powel](#)'s *Historie of Cambria* (1584) and [Richard Hakluyt](#)'s *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589). [John Dee](#) went so far as to assert that [Brutus of Britain](#) and [King Arthur](#) as well as Madoc had conquered lands in the Americas and therefore their heir [Elizabeth I of England](#) had a priority claim there.<sup>[14][15]</sup>

The Welsh Indians were not claimed until over a century later. Morgan Jones' tract is the first account, and was printed by [The Gentleman's Magazine](#) in 1740, launching a slew of publications on the subject. There is no genetic or archaeological evidence that the [Mandan](#) are related to the Welsh, however, and John Evans and Lewis and Clark reported they had found no Welsh Indians.<sup>[16]</sup> The Mandan are still alive today; the tribe was decimated by a [smallpox](#) epidemic in 1837-1838 and banded with the nearby [Hidatsa](#) and [Arikara](#) into the [Three Affiliated Tribes](#).

The Welsh Indian legend was revived in the 1840s and 1850s; this time the [Zunis](#), [Hopis](#) and/or [Navajo](#) were claimed to be of Welsh descent, by [George Ruxton](#) (Hopis, 1846), [P. G. S. Ten Broeck](#) (Zunis, 1854), and Abbé [Emmanuel Domenach](#) (Zunis, 1860), among others.<sup>[1]</sup> [Brigham Young](#) became interested in the supposed Hopi-Welsh connection: in 1858 Young sent a Welshman with [Jacob Hamblin](#) to the Hopi mesas to check for Welsh-speakers there. None were found, but in 1863 Hamblin brought three Hopi men to [Salt Lake City](#), where they were "besieged by Welshmen wanting them to utter Celtic words," to no avail.<sup>[1]</sup> Llewellyn Harris, a Welsh-American Mormon missionary who visited the Zuni in 1878, wrote that they had many Welsh words in their language, and that they claimed their descent from the "Cambaraga" – white men who had come by sea 300 years before the Spanish. However, Harris' claims have never been independently verified.<sup>[17]</sup>

The Madoc legend survived well into the twentieth century. In 1953, the [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) erected a plaque on the shores of [Mobile Bay, Alabama](#) "In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer who landed... in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language."<sup>[1]</sup> This plaque was later removed by the Alabama Parks Department.

## Later speculation and fiction

Several attempts to confirm Madoc's historicity have been made, but most historians of early America, notably [Samuel Eliot Morison](#), regard the story as myth. Madoc's legend has been a notable subject for poets, however. The most famous account in English is [Robert Southey](#)'s long 1805 poem *Madoc*, which uses the story to explore the poet's freethinking and egalitarian ideals. [18] Fittingly, Southey wrote *Madoc* to help finance a trip of his own to America, where he and [Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#) hoped to establish a Utopian state they called a "[Pantisocracy](#)". Southey's poem in turn inspired twentieth-century poet [Paul Muldoon](#) to write *Madoc: A Mystery*, which won the [Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize](#) in 1992. [19] It explores what may have happened if Southey and Coleridge had succeeded in coming to America to found their "ideal state". [20]

Novelists have also handled the Madoc legend. [Madeleine L'Engle](#)'s 1978 science fiction novel *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* imagines a descendant of Madoc who threatens the world with nuclear annihilation. In 1990 and 1991 Pat Winter published the two-volume *Madoc Saga*. Journalist [James Alexander Thom](#) also researched Madoc's voyage for his 1995 novel *The Children of First Man*. The fantasy work *Excalibur*, by American novelist [Sanders Anne Laubenthal](#), is set in Mobile and is based on the presumption that Madoc brought [King Arthur](#)'s sword *Excalibur* to the New World. Russian poet [Alexander S. Pushkin](#) composed a short poem "Madoc in Wales" (Медок в Уаллах, 1829) on the topic.

The township of [Madoc, Ontario](#), and the nearby village of [Madoc](#) are both named in the prince's memory, as are several local guest houses and pubs throughout North America and the United Kingdom. Despite some romantic claims to the contrary, however, the town of [Porthmadog](#) (meaning "Madoc's Port" in English) and the village of [Tremadog](#) ("Madoc's Town") in the county of [Gwynedd](#) are actually named after the industrialist and [Member of Parliament William Alexander Madocks](#), their principal developer, rather than the legendary son of Owain Gwynedd. The *Prince Madog*, a research vessel owned by the [University of Wales](#) and [VT Group](#), set sail on July 26, 2001, on her maiden voyage.

A plaque at [Fort Mountain State Park](#) in Georgia recounts a nineteenth-century interpretation of the ancient stone wall that gives the site its name. The plaque repeats Tennessee governor John Sevier's claim that the Cherokees believed "a people called Welsh" had built a fort on the mountain long ago to repel Indian attacks.

## Notes

1. <sup>^</sup> [a b c d e](#) D. D. Fowler, 2000, A laboratory for Anthropology. University of New Mexico Press, ISBN: 0826320368
2. <sup>^</sup> Mullaney, Steven *The Place of Stager* University of Michigan Press 1995 [ISBN 978-0472083466](#) p. 163 [1]
3. <sup>^</sup> Williams 1979, p.76

4. [^ Falls of the Ohio - Legends & Stories](#)
5. [^ Georgia's Fort Mountain and Prince Madoc of Wales](#)
6. [^ Smith, Philip E.](#), "Aboriginal Stone Constructions in the Southern Piedmont", in *University Of Georgia Laboratory Of Archaeology Series Report No 4* 1962
7. [^ North Carolina Ghosts and Legends: The Moon Eyed People](#)
8. [^ Melungeon-L Archives, December 2003](#)
9. [^ "New theory on Catoosa's first settlers" \*Catoosa County News\*, 25 February 2004](#)
10. [^ Welsh Caves of Alabama](#)
11. [^ text of John Sevier's 1810 letter](#)
12. [^ Enid Roberts \(ed.\)](#), *Gwaith Maredudd ap Rhys a'i gyfoedion* (Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth, 2003), poem 8.43-6. Original text with the poetical flourishes omitted in the translation within brackets: *Madog wych, (mwyedig wedd) / Iawn genau Owain Gwynedd, / Ni fynnai dir, (f'enaidd oedd,) / Na da mawr ond y moroedd*. Note that *genau* can mean "son" or "descendant" or even "a member of the royal retinue".
13. [^ Bradshaw](#), p. 29.
14. [^ Ken MacMillan](#). "Discourse on history, geography, and law: John Dee and the limits of the British empire, 1576-80". *Canadian Journal of History*, April 2001.
15. [^ Robert W. Barone](#). "Madoc and John Dee: Welsh Myth and Elizabethan Imperialism". *The Elizabethan Review*
16. [^ Newman, Marshall T.](#) "The Blond Mandan: A Critical Review of an Old Problem", *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Autumn, 1950), pp. 255-272
17. [^ \*Mormon Settlement in Arizona\* by James McClintock, p. 72. ISBN 1426436572](#)
18. [^ Bolton](#), pp. 123–125.
19. [^ Mosely, Merritt](#). [The Geoffrey Faber Memorial prize](#). From [facstaff.unca.edu/moseley/faber.html](http://facstaff.unca.edu/moseley/faber.html). Retrieved November 19, 2009.
20. [^ O'Neill](#), pp. 145–164.

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## Further reading

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**Welcome to History UK - the History of Wales!**  
**The discovery of America.... by a Welsh Prince?**

*In fourteen hundred and ninety-two  
Columbus sailed the ocean blue.*

Whilst it was generally believed that Columbus was the first European to discover America in 1492, it is now well known that Viking explorers reached parts of the east coast of Canada around 1100 and that Norwegian Leif Erikson's Vinland may have been an area that is now part of the United States. What is less known is that a Welshman may have followed in Erikson's footsteps, this time bringing settlers with him.

According to Welsh legend, that man was Prince Madog ab Owain Gwynedd.

A Welsh poem of the 15th century tells how Prince Madoc sailed away in 10 ships and discovered America. The account of the discovery of America by a Welsh prince, whether truth or myth, was apparently used by Queen Elizabeth I as evidence to the British claim to America during its territorial struggles with Spain. So who was this Welsh Prince and did he really discover America before Columbus?

Owain Gwynedd, king of Gwynedd in the 12th century, had nineteen children, only six of whom were legitimate. Madog (Madoc), one of the bastard sons, was born at Dolwyddelan Castle in the Lledr valley between Betws-y-Coed and Blaenau Ffestiniog.

On the death of the King in December 1169, the brothers fought amongst themselves for the right to rule Gwynedd. Madog, although brave and adventurous, was also a man of peace. In 1170 he and his brother, Riryd, sailed from Aber-Kerrik-Gwynan on the North Wales Coast (now Rhos-on-Sea) in two ships, the Gorn Gwynant and the Pedr Sant. They sailed west and landed in what is now Alabama in the USA.

Prince Madog then returned to Wales with great tales of his adventures and persuaded others to return to America with him. They sailed from Lundy Island in 1171 and were never heard of again.

They are believed to have landed at Mobile Bay, Alabama and then travelled up the Alabama river along which there are several stone forts, said by the local Cherokee Indians to have been constructed by "White People". These structures have been dated to several hundred years before Columbus and are of a similar design to Dolwyddelan Castle in North Wales. Were they built by Madog and his fellow settlers?

Early explorers and pioneers found evidence of Welsh influence among the tribes of Indians along the Tennessee and Missouri Rivers. In the 18th century an Indian tribe was discovered that seemed different to all the others that had been encountered before. Called the Mandans this tribe were described as white men with forts, towns and permanent villages laid out in streets and squares. They claimed ancestry with the Welsh and spoke a language remarkably similar to it. They fished with coracles, a type of boat still used in Wales today. It was also observed that unlike members of other tribes, these people grew white-haired with age. In addition, in 1799 Governor John Sevier of Tennessee wrote a report in which he mentioned the discovery of six skeletons encased in brass armour bearing the Welsh coat of arms.



*Mandan Bull Boats and Lodges: George Catlin*

George Catlin, a 19th century painter who spent eight years living among various Indian tribes including the Mandans, declared that he had uncovered the descendants of Prince Madog's expedition. He speculated that the Welshmen had lived among the Mandans for generations, intermarrying until their two cultures became virtually indistinguishable. Some later investigators supported his theory, noting that the Welsh and Mandan languages were so similar that the Mandans easily responded when spoken to in Welsh.



*Mandan Indian Village: George Catlin*

Unfortunately the tribe was virtually wiped out by a smallpox epidemic introduced by traders in 1837. But the belief in their Welsh heritage still persists and is celebrated by a plaque placed alongside Mobile Bay in 1953 by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

"In memory of Prince Madog," the inscription reads, "a Welsh explorer who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language."

© Historic UK

*Legend has it that Prince Madoc sailed from Wales in 1170 and discovered America many years before Columbus. This page includes extracts from an article by Jayne Wanner about Madoc, the Mandan indians (the tribe some historians say could have been the descendants of the Welsh settlers), and information about the strange welsh style stone buildings unlike any other american indian structure found in the regions of the Mandan tribe, and indeed one structure is supposed to resemble Dolwyddelan Castle the birthplace of Madoc in North Wales.*

First the Colwyn Bay, North Wales connection.

In 1170 the ships of two nations rendezvoused in the Irish Sea. Bewitched by a viking tale of a great land beyond the ocean, Madoc, Prince of Snowdon, commanding the Welsh ships with Rhiryd his brother, commanding the Irish fleet, set out into the unknown. Some years later Madoc returned in his ship, the Gwennan Gorn and told of their discovery of a new land. A great fleet set sail with Welsh settlers and was never seen again.

Did Madoc, Prince of Snowdon, really find America? Just another fairy tale? Perhaps not.

On the shores of Alabama there stands a stone, "In memory of Prince Madoc" A Welsh explorer who landed on the shore of Mobile Bay in 1170 AD.

The Welsh legend says Madoc sailed from the Afon Ganol in Penrhyn Bay. However there was no evidence to support this until in the 1950's the new sea wall was being constructed. During the construction work the workmen came across the remains of an ancient and long forgotten Harbour wall. Parts of the original 1000 year old quay can still be found in the garden of a house called "Odstone" on the sea front between Penrhyn Bay and Rhos on Sea.

A CONSIDERATION: WAS AMERICA DISCOVERED IN 1170 by PRINCE MADOC AB OWAIN GWYNEDD OF WALES?

By: Jayne Wanner.

#### Extract 1

"In 1170 A.D., a certain Welsh prince, Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd, sailed away from his homeland, which was filled with war and strife and battles between his brothers. Yearning to be away from the feuds and quarrels, he took his ships and headed west, seeking a better place. He returned to Wales brimming with tales of the new land he found--warm and golden and fair. His tales convinced more than a few of his fellow countrymen, and many left with him to return to this wondrous new land, far across the sea.

This wondrous new land is believed to be what is now Mobile Bay, Alabama. Time has left several blank pages between the legend of Madoc and the "history" of America, with its reports of white Indians who speak Welsh, and these blank pages have been the subject of much controversy in certain circles over the five centuries since Columbus discovered the New World."

#### Extract 2

"The second, and more convincing reason, is a series of pre-Columbian forts built up the Alabama River, and the tradition handed down by the Cherokee Indians of the "White People" who built them. Testimony includes a letter dated 1810 from Governor John Seiver of Tennessee in response to an inquiry by Major Amos Stoddard. Governor Seiver refers to a time he spent with the Cherokee in 1782, and relates a conversation he had with Oconostota, who had been the ruling chief of the Cherokee Nation for nearly sixty years. Seiver had asked the Chief about the people who had left the "fortifications" in his country. The chief told him: "It is handed down by the Forefathers that the works had been made by the White people who had formerly inhabited the country. . ." and gave him a brief history of the "Whites." When asked if he had ever heard what nation these Whites had belonged to, Oconostota told Seiver that he "...had heard his grandfather and father say they were a people called Welsh, and that they had crossed the Great Water and landed first near the mouth of the Alabama River near Mobile..."

#### Extract 3

Three major forts, completely unlike any known Indian structure, were constructed along the route settlers arriving at Mobile Bay would have taken up the Alabama and Coosa rivers to the Chattanooga area. Archaeologists have testified that the forts are of pre-Columbian origin, and most agree they date several hundred years before 1492. All are believed to have been built by

the same group of people within the period of a single generation, and all bear striking similarities to the ancient fortifications of Wales. The first fort, erected on top of Lookout Mountain, near DeSoto Falls, Alabama, was found to be nearly identical in setting, layout, and method of construction, to Dolwyddelan Castle in Gwynedd, North Wales, the presumed birthplace of Madoc."

If you have found this of interest go to <http://www.barstow.cc.ca.us/wac/madoc.htm> for the complete article on Prince Madoc by Jane Wanner.

This has more information about "welsh" style forts in the southern USA.

Dolwyddelan Castle.



The site of the original Castle, that is probably the actual birthplace of Madoc, as viewed from the present Castle.

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Nieuw

# Prince Madoc

Upon the death of Owain Gwynedd ap Gruffydd, Prince of Gwynedd from 1137 until 1170, there was a great deal of competition among his many children. One of the illegitimate sons, Prince Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd was eager to get away from all the trouble. He and his brother Riryd led a group of presumably peace loving countrymen to a new land where they could start afresh . . . or so the story goes.

According to the legend, Madoc and Riryd sailed west in 1170 with 2 boats and a number of colonists, and landed in the area of what is now Mobile, Alabama. One

of the boats returned to Wales, fitted out an expedition of 10 ships, and returned to North America to stay. Prince Madoc and his settlers moved up the Alabama and Coosa Rivers to the Chattanooga area. They built a series of forts along the route, one of which at DeSoto Falls, Alabama, is said to have been nearly identical in setting, layout, and method of construction to Dolwyddelan Castle in Gwynedd, Wales.

Prince Madoc is also said to have settled in the West Indies and Mexico where he became known as Quetzacoatl, the white Aztec god. However, according to the most popular and persistent version of the legend, the Welsh settlers moved further and further inland from Alabama, and eventually moved in with the Mandan Indians on the Missouri River in North Dakota where they were assimilated into the aboriginal culture.

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One of the "forts" said to have been built by Prince Madoc and his followers is located at Fort Mountain State Park in Georgia. This is located in the Chattahoochee National Forest close to the Cohutta Wilderness area, in North Georgia. For further details, please visit [\*\*\*Georgia's Fort Mountain\*\*\*](#).

## **Fort Mountain, Georgia**

The following photographs were shared by Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie Lee Robbins who visited Fort Mountain in the early spring of 2006.

Approaching the fort wall from the South.

This wall is well over 800 feet long. It is 7 feet in high and 12 feet wide in many places. It seems to be generally agreed upon that the wall was originally much higher. Looking along the fort wall in an westerly direction.

Many of the stones appear to have been knocked over and some areas behind the wall have filled in with earth washed toward the rock wall. The wall has many semi-circular structures as shown here.

These "pits" as they are referred to by the state authorities appear to have a defensive purpose. This view is from the south side of the wall; i.e., the side an enemy would see when approaching the fort. West end of the fort wall.



Access becomes very difficult at this point thereby suggesting that this may have been a defensive structure. North West View

Jimmie Lee Robbins wrote:

". . . looking out from the North West side of the Mountain. This is typical of the land around the summit except for the side that has the Stone Wall.

"The South side is the only place that would need protection."

Some authorities feel certain this wall was built Prince Madoc and his followers as a defensive structure while others argue with equal certainty that the wall was built by native North American Indians for religious and/or astronomical purposes. Unfortunately, no artifacts have been found.

For further details, please visit [\*Georgia's Fort Mountain\*](#).

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Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, tales appeared to the effect that various aboriginal tribes of North America spoke a form of ancient Welsh, had pale complexions and blue eyes, cherished ancient relics including Bibles printed in Welsh, built little wicker-framed, hide-covered boats similar to Welsh coracles and Irish currachs, and so on. At various times, the Shawnee, Delaware, Conestoga, Comanche, along with least nine more actual tribes and eight imaginary ones were said to have been blue-eyed Welsh-speaking Indians. Eventually, the Mandan of North Dakota became the most favoured tribe, possibly because their dwellings, and to an extent their social structure, differed from those of their more nomadic neighbours.

Not all horse-riding, buffalo-hunting plains Indians lived in tepees. The earthen lodges of the Mandans each housed several families, a few favourite horses, a number of dogs, and a wide range of equipment for cooking, hunting, and ceremonial observances.

(John A. Garraty: *The American Nation*, New York, 1966, pages 462 & 463)

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The rumours were so persistent that in 1790's a Welsh clergyman named John

Evans was appointed to search for Madoc's descendants and reconvert them to Christianity. After an adventurous journey as far west as the Rocky Mountains and spending a winter with the Mandan, John Evans reported that he had met no Welsh-speaking aboriginal peoples. He wrote: "from the intercourse I have with Indians from the latitude 35° to 49° I think you may with safety inform my friends that they (Welsh speaking aboriginal peoples) have no existence." Lewis and Clark came to a similar conclusion, but the legends persisted.

In November 1953, The Daughters of the American Revolution even went so far as to erect a bronze tablet on Fort Morgan, Mobile Bay that reads: "In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language".

(see Samuel Eliot Morison: *The European Discovery of America*, New York, 1971 for further information)

***For information on Madoc's voyage to North America, see these web sites:***

**Prince Madoc and the Discovery of America**

<http://www.where-can-i-find.com/wales/history/madoc.htm>

**Madoc 1170**

<http://www.madoc1170.com/home.htm>

**Georgia's Fort Mountain and Prince Madoc of Wales**

<http://www.tylwythteg.com/fortmount/Ftmount.html>

**Prince Madoc**

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/3579/madog.html>

**The Mystery of Madoc in Mobile**

<http://members.tripod.com/robertstapleton/madoc.html>

**Origins of the Mandan**

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bos/bos217.htm>

**Nieuw:**

# The Discovery of America Before Columbus

## Vikings Visited Pre-Columbian America, but Others Were Here First

Apr 30, 2009 Terry McNamee

The myth that Christopher Columbus "discovered" the New World has persisted for centuries. But the man who received all the credit was actually a late arrival.

Before European settlement, the coastal waters off what is now Canada were home to massive schools of giant cod. Huge herds of walrus were living as far south as Nova Scotia. Oysters, lobsters, capelin, herring, sturgeon, squid and salmon were found in astonishing abundance. It was a treasure trove for fishermen who dared go there. European fishermen may have visited there for centuries before Columbus accidentally landed in Central America, but fisherman leave no artifacts.

There is proof that the Norse predated Columbus's arrival by nearly 500 years. At L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, the remains of an early 11th century Norse village can be seen even today.

### Were There Other Visitors to America?

In 1969, modern explorer Thor Heyerdahl successfully sailed across the Atlantic in an Egyptian reed boat to prove that the ancient Egyptians could have done it. The Greeks and Phoenicians had ocean-going vessels. Did any of them cross the Atlantic? No one knows.

According to Irish legend, the monk St. Brendan reached North America in the sixth century. The account of the voyage was published as the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani (Travels of St. Brendan)* some 300 years later. In 1976, Tim Severin sailed a replica Irish boat called a curragh from Ireland to Newfoundland, showing that St. Brendan could have made the journey.

Two petroglyphs (rock carvings) were discovered in West Virginia in the 1960s. Geologist and archaeologist Robert L. Pyle believes they were written in an old Irish script called Ogham. But other scientists concluded that a linguistic analysis does not uphold the theory, and no related Irish artifacts were found. If Brendan landed there, he left nothing behind.

## **Tales of Welsh Indians in America**

There is a persistent legend that a Welsh prince named Madoc arrived in North America in 1170. This story was retold in 1580 to persuade Queen Elizabeth I of England that much of North America belonged to the British.

Explorers who visited or lived with the Mandan people of North Dakota, including the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804-05 and nineteenth-century painter George Catlin, reported that their language was so similar to Welsh that the Mandan people understood it. However, a Welsh traveller named John Evans spent the winter of 1796-97 with the Mandans while searching for the “Welsh Indians”. His conclusion? There weren’t any. If Lewis and Clark found Mandans who understood Welsh, the Mandans had probably learned it from Evans eight years earlier.

It is harder to explain why, prior to known European contact, so many Mandans were light skinned and had brown, blonde or red hair and blue or hazel eyes, instead of having black hair, brown eyes and darker skin like their neighbours. Some people suggest a Norse influence.

## **The Notorious Kensington Runestone**

In November 1898, a farmer near Kensington, Minnesota, discovered a stone with engraved runes telling of a Norse expedition through the Great Lakes in 1362. This completely altered the known history of European exploration in the Americas — but is the stone genuine? Many university scholars have studied it, and it was on display at the Smithsonian Institution in 1948. Most scholars have concluded the runes are fake.

The idea of Vikings venturing inland continues to intrigue people, but whether the Norse sailed into Hudson Bay or through the Great Lakes, or the Irish landed in Newfoundland hundreds of years earlier, doesn’t change one thing.

Thousands of years ago, the ancestors of today’s Native people were the first to explore the continent.

Who discovered America? They did.

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## Nieuw

### Origins of The Mandan

By: Madoc

As a direct lineal descendant of Madoc ab Gwynedd, Prince of Wales and alleged founder of the Mandan tribe, I'd like to shove my two cent's worth in...

Madoc (or Madog) was born about 1150, one of four sons of the King of Wales. He and his brothers did not get along at all, and after the King died, Wales was divided 4 ways among his children. Madoc chose not to rule his domain directly, having developed the wanderlust that consumes so many Celts. He was a well-regarded sailor, such that his sea-faring exploits were recorded less than 100 years later by a French historian, and again by Dr. John Dee in the 1500's.

Madoc is said to have left Wales with 5 ships, and to have arrived in the New World about 1172 or '73. He landed twice, once in Central America, where he is alleged to have been the "God" that the locals later mistook Cortez for. He then backtracked through the Gulf of Mexico and landed around New Orleans. He packed his men and equipment up the Mississippi, finally stopping due to sickness in his men. He and his able-bodied crew floated back downriver and returned to Wales.

Madoc left Wales again around 1176, and returned to the Mississippi river. He supposedly found that his surviving original crew had intermarried with the local Native American populations, and most chose not to return to Wales. Madoc himself may have stayed, as there is no record of his returning to Wales again.

Years later, Lewis and Clark heard fantastic tales of "white Indians" who supposedly built forts, spoke Welsh, and fished from "coracles," which are leather boats totally unlike canoes. They were unable to substantiate those claims, although they found many "light-skinned" Native Americans, some of whom had blue eyes and blond or blondish hair and spoke a mish-mash of Sioux and something that resembled Welsh in some aspects. These people claimed,

unlike their compatriots, that they were descended of a "race of giants" who built their tipis of logs and came from "across the sea" (a sea which they had never seen, by the way) and whose leader (Madoc?) had promised to return for them one day. The local Native Americans whom they lived with supported their claims.

The Mandan as a tribe still exist. They speak Souix and live mostly on reservation land in Wisconsin and up into Canada. They traditionally build log cabins and fish from leather coracles.

The Mandan claim that they were separated as an independant tribe because of disease and wars with settlers. They have largely become Souix, and the US government lists the Mandan as Souix.

My family traces its roots directly to Madoc through Ireland, where his offspring settled after being evicted from Wales by the British. As the King of England said at the time, "They can go to Hell or go to Connaught." My father is the direct lineal descendant of the Crown, and I am his first-born (and only) son. My father is the legitimate Prince of Wales, and Charles is a Pretender.

Documentation:

AUTHOR(s): Deacon, Richard, 1911-  
TITLE(s): Madoc and the discovery of America; some new light on an old controversy [by] Richard Deacon. [1st American ed.]  
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AUTHOR(s): Armstrong, Zella.  
TITLE(s): Who discovered America? The amazing story of Madoc. Chattanooga, Lookout Pub. Co., 1950.

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TITLE(s): The Welch Indians; or, A collection of papers respecting a people whose ancestors emigrated from Wales to America in the year 1170, with Prince Madoc, (threehundred years before the first voyage of Columbus), and who are said now to inhabit a beautiful country on the Westside of the Mississippi [!] Dedicate to the Missionary society by George Burder. London, Printed for T. Chapman [1797] 35 p. 21 cm. Consists chiefly of extracts from the Gentleman's magazine, 1789-1792, the Monthly magazine, December, 1796, and letters from missionaries and traders.

AUTHOR(s): Pugh, Ellen, 1920-  
TITLE(s): Brave his soul; the story of Prince Madog of Wales and his discovery of America in 1170, by Ellen Pugh, with the assistance of David B. Pugh. New York, Dodd, Mead [1970]

Summary: Discusses the validity of the claims that an obscure Welsh prince landed in Mobile Bay in 1170 and established a settlement that resulted in a tribe of Welsh-speaking Indians.



## Bowen family web History

### Mandan Indians



The Mandan were a passive tribe of the plains area and were culturally connected with their neighbors on the Missouri River, the Arikara and the Hidatsa. The Mandan had interesting cultural traits, including a myth of origin describing that their ancestors climbed from beneath the earth on the roots of a grapevine. It is believed that at one time the Mandan lived further east, but they historically migrated westward up the Missouri River. By the mid-18th century, they occupied nine villages near the mouth of the Heart River in south central North Dakota. After withstanding a severe smallpox outbreak and attacks of the Assiniboin and the Sioux, the Mandan moved farther up the Missouri River, opposite the Arikara villages. It was here that the Mandan survivors merged into two villages on opposite sides of the Knife River. In 1804, they were visited by the Lewis and Clark Expedition, who reported in their journals that the tribe numbered some 1,250. It was during this visit that Sacagawea became part of their team. In 1837, after an epidemic of smallpox and cholera, the Mandan were reduced to some 150, all dwelling in a single village. In 1845, when the Hidatsa moved from the Knife River region to the Fort Berthold trading post, the few Mandan joined them. In 1870, a large reservation was designated for the Mandan, the Hidatsa, and the Arikara in North Dakota at the Fort Berthold Reservation.

## Madog Owain and the Mandan people.

The Mandan Indian tribe also known as the "White Indians" is conjectured to have mixed with and therefore were descendants of prince Madog (Madoc) Owain of Wales who may be assumed an ancestor of the Madogs of Llanfynydd Wales. Prince Madog ap Owain Gwynedd was a younger son of Owain Gwynedd, King of North Wales, and Queen Brenda, daughter of the Lord of Camo, it is likely that he was born at Dolwyddelan castle in the twelfth century.

Prince Madoc of Wales and his people may have discovered America in 1170 or some 322 years before Christopher Columbus would arrive. British historian Richard Deacon writes in his book *Madoc and the Discovery of America* ;

"Prince Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd son of a king of Wales, was born in 1150 the story goes. He sailed from Wales and landed near the present site of Mobile, Alabama. He returned home, then made another voyage to the continent. This time he went up the Alabama River and other streams, then disappeared in the wilds of what is now Tennessee. But a traveler's account of the 1800's tells of fair-skinned Indians in that area who spoke some Welsh words and put sentences together in the way Welsh people do."

George Catlin, a nineteenth-century painter who spent eight years living among various Indian tribes, was among those who were impressed by the Mandan's remarkable traits. Catlin wrote: "A stranger in the Mandan village is first struck with the different shades of complexion, and various colors of hair which he sees in a crowd about him, and is almost disposed to exclaim that these are not Indians." The artist also noted "a most pleasing symmetry and proportion of features, with hazel, gray and blue eyes."

During his long stay which lasted for years among the Mandan tribe, Catlin makes many interesting paintings of almost every aspect of their daily lives as well as written observations. Catlin was the only White man to make a written and pictorial history of these rituals and customs which included, their dwellings and torture rituals. Catlin finally came to the conclusion that the Mandan's were the descendants of the Madog people based partially on these factors.

The Mandans spoke Welsh, they used a boat which was known as the Welsh Coracle and many of the Mandans had blond hair and blue eyes.

Another account of the Madog legend is from, in James G. Perry's *Kinfolk*,

" Prince Madoc (son of Owain ab Gwynedd) it is said, sailed to America 300 years before Columbus in 1170 with one ship. He returned and equipped ten ships and with colonists sailed again for the new world. It is presumed that he landed at Mobile Bay, Alabama. Early explorers and pioneers have found evidences of the Welsh influence along the Tennessee and Missouri Rivers, among certain tribes of Indians. There is no record that the Prince ever returned to the land of his birth. Peculiar things

have been found in America. It is there are Welsh speaking Indians up the Missouri River called the White Indians. Also, they fish with coracles, and pull the little skin covered boats with one oar, like a spade. These boats are used in Wales today."

Later Mandan's were involved with The Lewis and Clark Expedition

### Smallpox decimates the Mandans'

After European contact, the Mandan, Hidatsa and Sahnish were subjected to several devastating smallpox epidemics that nearly destroyed them. They had no immunity and were trusting. Unprotected from these diseases, they became infected. Whole families, clans, specific bands, chiefs, spiritual leaders, and medicine men died quickly, taking with them many of their social and spiritual ceremonies and clan rites.

The tribe was virtually destroyed by Small Pox epidemics before 1796 and is chronicled in Henry and Schoolcraft. Lewis and Clark found two villages one on each side and about fifteen miles below the Knife River. Both villages consisted of forty to fifty lodges and united could raise about three hundred and fifty men. Lewis and Clark describe them as having united with the Hidatsa and engaging in continual warfare against the Arikara and the Sioux. In 1837, smallpox attacked them again, raged for many weeks and left only one hundred and twenty-five survivors. The Mandan's were taken in by the Arikara, with whom they intermarried. They separated, again forming a small village of their own at Fort Berthold. By 1850 there were three hundred and eighty- five Mandan, largely of mixed blood,

The great plague of smallpox struck the Three Tribes in June of 1837, and this horrible epidemic brought disaster to these Indians. Francis A. Chardon's journals state that on July 14, a young Mandan died of smallpox and several more had caught it. The plague spread with terrible rapidity and raged with a violence unknown before. Death followed in a few hours after the victim was seized with pain in the head; a very few who caught the disease survived. The Hidatsa scattered out along the Little Missouri to escape the disease and the Arikara hovered around Fort Clark. But the Mandan remained in their villages and were afflicted worst; they were afraid of being attacked by Sioux if they ventured out of their villages. By September 30, Chardon estimated that seven- eighths of the Mandan and one-half of the Arikara and Hidatsa were dead. Many committed suicide because they felt they had no chance to survive. Nobody thought of burying the dead, death was too fast and everyone still living was in despair. The scene of desolation was appalling beyond the conception of the imagination. The Mandan were reduced from 1800 in June to 23 men, 40 women, and 60 to 70 young people by fall. Their Chief Four Bears, had died. (Shane, 1959, p. 199).

On July 28, 1837, Chardon wrote: "the second chief of the Mandan was the brave and remarkable Four Bears, life-long friend of the whites, recipient of the praises of Catlin

and Maximilian, and beloved by all that knew him. " Now, as his people were dying all about him, he spoke:

My friends one and all, listen to what I have to say- Ever since I can remember, I have loved the whites. I have lived with them ever since I was a boy, and to the best of my knowledge, I have never wronged the white man, on the contrary, I have a/ways protected them from the insults of others, which they cannot deny. The Four Bears never saw a white man hungry, but what he gave him to eat, drink, and a Buffalo skin to sleep on in time of need. I was a/ways ready to die for them, which they cannot deny. I have done everything that a red skin could do for them, and how have they repaid it? With ingratitude! I have never called a white man a Dog, but today, I do pronounce them to be a set of black-hearted Dogs, they have deceived me, them that I always considered brother, has turned out to be my worst enemies. I have been in many battles, and often wounded, but the wounds of my enemies I exalt in, but today I am wounded, and by whom, by those same white Dogs that I have always considered, and treated as Brothers. I do not fear Death my friends. You know it, but to die with my face rotten, that even the Wolves will shrink with horror at meeting me, and say to themselves, that is the Four Bears, the friend of the Whites -listen well what I have to say, as it will be the last time you will hear me. Think of your wives, children, brothers, sisters, friends, and in fact all that you hold dear, are all dead, or dying, with their faces all rotten caused by those dogs the whites, think of all that my friends, and rise up all together and not leave one of them alive: The Four Bears will act his part. (Abel, p.124, 1932).

The Mandan villages consisted of about fifty lodges arranged around a central plaza. In the central plaza was located a sacred cedar post. This post was considered sacred because it represented Lone Man, who is a great hero in Mandan culture. The social position of each household determined the location of their lodges.

Catlins letters about the Mandans :

You will nothe that the actual "letters" are numbered differently from the numbers below, this is beacuse the original series of letters dealt with more than the Mandans tribes. we are concentrating in his work concerning the Mandan.

Letter 1 below, is actually letter 10 in the entire series.

[Read John Sevier Tennessee's first governor 1810 letter concerning "Welsh Indians".]

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by Dana Olson

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Madog Center for Welsh Studies University of Rio Grande Rio Grande, OH 45631

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A Consideration: Was America discovered in 1170 by Prince Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd of Wales ? By: Jayne Wanner

MHA nation website ; The Three Affiliated Tribes A history of the Mandan Indians

Compilations of various Madog / Madoc legends and information ]

From a descendant of Madoc? ]

The children of first man: James Alexander Thom; *Fawcett Gold Medal*

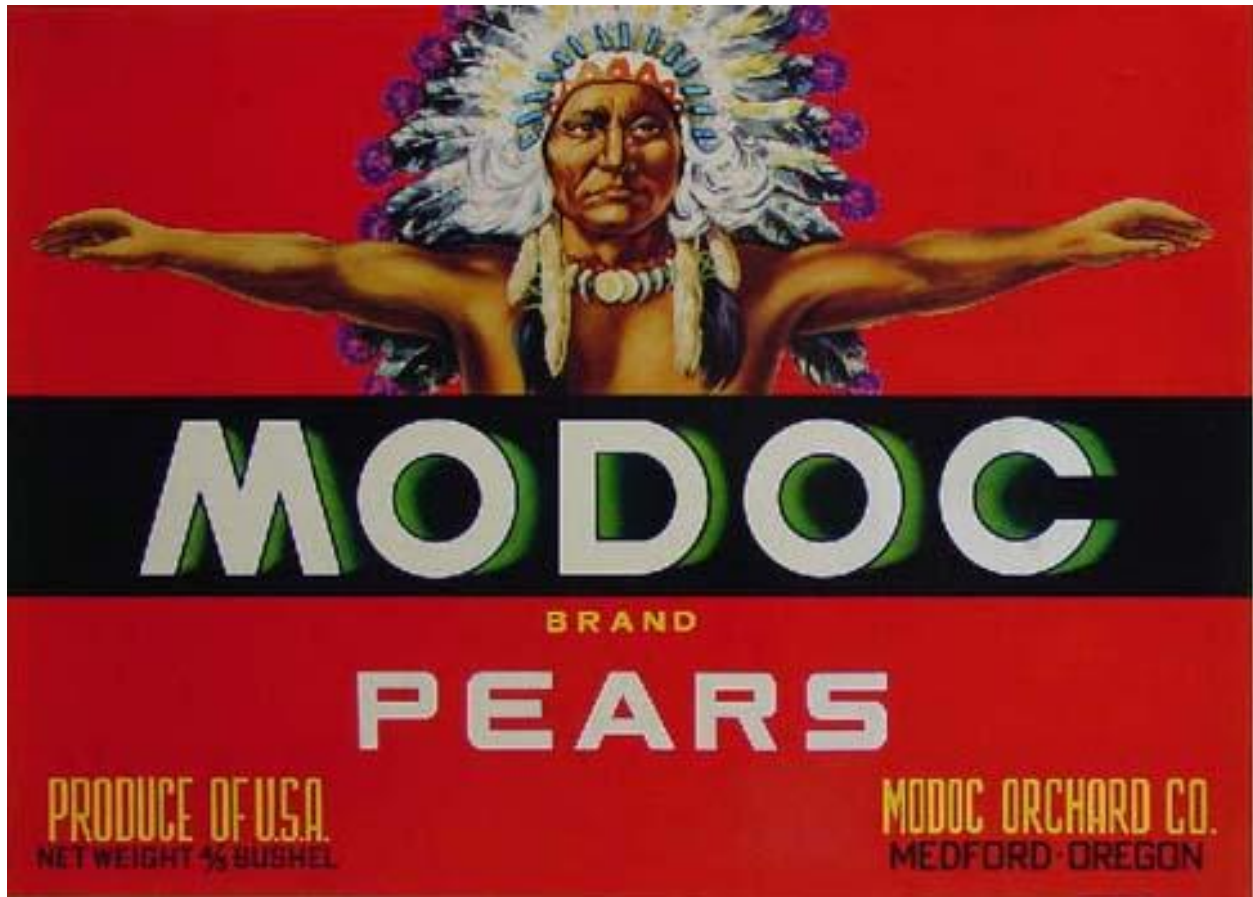
The forgotten people : Tony Williams ; Gomer press 1996

We had previously referenced as Catlin's book "Prince Madoc, Founder of Clark County, Indiana." However this was the title of Dana Olson's book until the 4th edition. He later changed the title to reflect more accurately the book's content.

One of Catlin's most popular books was titled, "Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and conditions of North American Indians," published in 1844.

Best regards, Sundeia Murphy

Thanks to Sundeia Murphy for bringing this to our attention, we removed the reference on March 22, 2003.



## Nieuw

### The search for the ‘Welsh Indians’

During the seventeenth century, various explorers claimed to have encountered Welsh-speaking native Americans. The first known account came from a Reverend Morgan Jones, a minister from near New York who had been appointed a naval chaplain in 1660. After being captured by a people known as the Doeg, part of the Tuscarora people, in what is now South Carolina in 1666, he cried out in Welsh “*Have I escaped so many dangers, and must I now be knocked on the head like a dog?*”. A ‘war-captain’ heard him and understood the language, as a result of which he spared Jones’s life. Jones then went on to preach Christianity to the Doeg in Welsh for three days a week over four months. Unfortunately, he did not report this event until he wrote a letter on 10 March 1686 to Thomas Lloyd, another minister in New York. By this time, Paul Marana, an Italian writer living in Paris, had already published his opinion that the Doeg were of Welsh origin in 1673 and it is possible that this influenced Jones’s recollection of the events of twenty years earlier; it was not published until 1740. A similar account, relating the story of a shipwrecked Welsh sailor from Brecon called Stedman, asserted that in the early 1660s, he was washed up and astonished the locals by speaking their language. They are said to have told him



that their ancestors had come from *Gwynedd in Prydain Fawr* ('Gwynedd in Great Britain'). This was not reported until 1777, in a letter from Charles Lloyd to a Reverend N Owen; the same letter includes the more complex story of Oliver Humphreys, a merchant from Surinam who learned the language of a people on a remote part of the Florida coast and later discovered it to be similar to Welsh. The most notable thing about these stories is that they were universally reported years after the purported events (and in one case more than a century after), when they could no longer be verified. In 1753, [Robert Dinwiddie \(1693-1770\)](#), Governor of Virginia, asked for a report into Welsh Christians supposedly discovered west of the Mississippi in 1750. The report so convinced him that he put up £500 to finance an expedition to find them, but he returned to England in 1758 before the expedition could be mounted.

Around 1780, the search for "Welsh Indians" became fixed on the [Mandan people](#) of North Dakota. They were notably fair skinned by comparison with neighbouring peoples, which has led to them being dubbed "The White Indians". Speaking a language of the Sioux family, their heartland was the basin of the River Missouri and its tributaries Knife River and Heart River. Unlike other plains Indians, the Mandan were agriculturalists, living in villages when first encountered by the Canadian trader [Pierre Gaultier de Varennes \(1685-1749\)](#) in 1737, which made them all the more unusual; they also used oval skin boats with wooden frames, similar to the traditional Welsh coracle. These features quickly brought them to the attention of European settlers, who conjectured that these might be the descendants of Madoc's followers.

The publication of *An Enquiry into the Truth of the Tradition concerning the Discovery of America by Prince Madog ab Owen Gwynedd about the year 1170* by John Williams (1727-1798) reawakened interest in the story in Wales, undergoing a nationalist revival at that time. [Samuel Jones \(1735-1814\)](#), a Baptist minister at Pennepek (Philadelphia, USA), became involved in the search for the "Welsh Indians" after receiving a letter from William Richards, claiming that "...if such a nationalistic exists, and there seems now to be no great room to doubt the fact, it will then appear that a branch of the Welsh Nation has preserved its independence even to this day": the search for the descendants of Madoc was becoming mixed up with developing Welsh nationalism. In 1792, the explorer [John Thomas Evans](#) (1770-1799) was sent to investigate their language, as it was supposed to contain recognisably Welsh words. He was imprisoned by the Spanish as a spy in 1794, but managed to persuade the authorities that he was searching for the "Welsh Indians"; it happened that they were financing a party under the Scottish fur trader James McKay, who was also seeking a newly discovered people who were supposed to be the fabled Welsh speaking Indians. This people, identified with the Mandans who had actually been discovered in 1737, had been rediscovered by a French trader, Jacques d'Église in 1791. Arriving among the Mandan on 24 September 1796, John Evans spent some months without finding any trace of Welsh cultural influence. As a result, he wrote back to Samuel Jones of Pennepek, who was one of his contacts in America, on 15 July 1797 that "*Thus having explored and charted the Missurie for 1,800 miles and by my Communications with the Indians this side of the Pacific Ocean from 35 to 49 degrees of Latitude, I am able to inform you that there is no such People as the Welsh Indians*".

There the matter ought to have rested. With the westward expansion of the young United States of America, contact with the native peoples of the plains became more frequent (and, as often as

not, hostile). The hoped-for “Welsh Indians” failed to materialise, as did the “Lost Tribes of Israel”, the descendants of Leif Erikson and other putative European settlers of the distant past. Madoc was relegated to the realm of romantic poetry and fiction until the artist [George Catlin \(1796-1872\)](#) spent some time with the Mandan in 1832 and convinced himself that the earlier reports of their Welsh linguistic affinities were correct, after all; he even suggested that the tribal name was “*a corruption or abbreviation, perhaps, of ‘Madagwys,’ the name applied by the Welsh to the followers of Madawc*”. He suggested that Mandan ceramics were similar to those found close to the Gulf of Mexico, confirming to him that they were descendants of Madoc who had migrated northwards from their landing point in Mobile Bay. Six years later, smallpox hit the Mandan and with fewer than two hundred left, they amalgamated with their neighbours the Hidatsa and Arikara.



The death-knell for the story came at the Langollen *eisteddfod* of 1858, where a competition for the best essay on Madoc ap Owain resulted in a controversial entry by the chemist and amateur historian [Thomas Stephens \(1821-1875\)](#). One of the judges awarded Stephens the prize, another awarded it jointly with a pro-Madoc submission, while a third resigned; however, the main committee rejected the award to Stephens on the grounds that it was “*not on the given subject*” and when Stephens objected, they ordered the band to play. The audience demanded to hear Stephens, who attacked the committee for wishing to suppress the uncomfortable truth that Madoc was unattested in medieval chronicles and therefore did not exist. Since then, there has been little enthusiasm for reviving the stories of Madoc on this side of the Atlantic.

Things were rather different in the United States of America. Spared the fallout from Stephens's essay, the views of earlier generations were repeated into the twentieth century. In 1953, the Daughters of the American Revolution set up a commemorative plaque to Madoc near Fort Morgan on Mobile Bay (Alabama, USA). The plaque, pictured here, was later removed and is now understood to be in storage. Perhaps the story of Madoc no longer finds favour among the American public.

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This page was written by Keith Fitpatrick-Matthews.  
Last updated 30 March 2008

Nieuw

# THE COREE ARE NOT EXTINCT.®

## Chapter One

By Al Pate.

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A good book should begin with justification for its writing and a preview of what it is going to tell the reader. This book was written as a series of notes to various people about the Native Americans. The notes are presented with editing to delete most of the personal and irrelevant content characteristic of letters.

It was always a given in my family that the members of Sir Walter Raleigh's "Lost Colony" survived among the Indians of Eastern North Carolina. This book is a search for the descendants of members of the English colony brought to America by John White in 1585. It is based on historical records, relevant documents of whatever sort, and Pate family traditions and a lot of interesting conversations. It is complicated by a lot of history that is not included in the stories of the "Lost Colony" offered for popular consumption.

According to family traditions, the Pates were Welsh, with land holdings and business and political interest" in England in the early 1600's. The family crest indicate. that they were privy councilors to the king. This crest also suggests that their position, as privy councilors, was not a comfortable one.

The Pates were active in the fabric industry, and owned estates that required a broad education for their successful operation. They were economic administrators under the Tudors, and they emptied London jails of their highest quality prisoners to populate colonies around the World.

Because of family ties, with families such as the Blounts, Skipwiths and Chevinses, they learned to take the sop that "He who rules Wales, will one day England rule," without gagging. They appreciated their Welsh heritage, but they knew how to capitalize on their Englishness.

For generations the Pates of Wayne County, North Carolina, have been in close working associations with Indian families of the Lumbee and Coharie tribes, such as the Jacobses, Hargroves, Wynns, Carrs and others. In the preparation of the history of the Wayne County Pates, *Debtor's Legacy*, I became conscious of another story, partially revealed in a subsequent manuscript, *At Your Beginnings*, prepared for the Jacobs family.

*At Your Beginnings* made me aware of a bigger story that needed telling. Neither *Debtor's Legacy* nor *At Your Beginnings* was the really heart-touching story that lay lost in the path from where my people came from to where we are today. The Search for Johnny Chevin is that heretofore untold story. It tied together a lot of historical loose ends. It ties together a lot of historically, culturally and ethnically isolated people, whose descendants still struggle with the problem of cultural identity.

It will be helpful to the reader to have, in the context of the narrative, some information about source" of topics alluded to in *The Search for Johnny Chevin*, which was the ground out of which this book grew. The background of the Lost Colony of Sir Walter Raleigh is the discovery and exploration of northeastern North America by the Vikings, under the leadership of Leif Erikson and Thorfinn Karlsefni, circa 1000-1010. This is authoritatively presented by Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Palsson in *The Vinland Sagas, The Norse Discovery of America*, published by Penguin Books in 1965. This is the official translation of the Vikings own records, the Icelandic Sagas, recently returned to Iceland by the Danish government,

Many popular and timely books and television shows have made us all aware of the search for a Western Passage from Europe to China. Most of us are now aware that a navigational elite have known the Earth is round since the days of the Greek geographer Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus,, circa A.D. 127), one of the many Greek encyclopaedists who made Egyptian knowledge known to Europe (not always acknowledging their sources). The writings of Paul E. Hoffman, Professor of History, Louisiana State University, are among the best sources for review of ancient world exploration, particularly the earliest explorations of the southeastern part of North America.

Especially relevant is Hoffman's *A New Andalusia and a Way to the Orient*, published by the LSU press in 1990, which develops from a wide variety of archival sources a fascinating discussion of the earliest activities of the Spanish and French in the Southeast.

Depopulation of Europe by various plagues, and incessant warfare between Christians and Moslems in Crusades of the Middle Ages, were the main causes of loss of interest in America during the Dark Ages, circa 1100 to 1500. The social chaos of the Dark ages was aggravated by meteorological conditions that created a small Ice Age around 1300, which made North Atlantic navigation extremely hazardous.

However, before the historical curtain closed on America for some three centuries, Madoc ab (son of) Owen Gwynned brought two groups of colonists from Wales to America in 1170 and 1190. He did this following the example of Brendan the Irish Abbot, who went to escape the Vikings, who referred to the monks they found in America as Unipods. This obviously alluding to the ground-length robes they wore.

Owen Gwynned was descended from Viking kings of Dublin. According to the exhaustive study of the Welsh Indian legends, *Madoc and the Discovery of America*, by Richard Deacon, Madoc was the son of Owen Gwynned by Brenda, daughter of Howell of Carno. The ancestry of his father and the name of his mother indicate the mythology that drove Madoc. Deacon clearly indicates that Owen Gwynned cohabited with many of the royalty he visited or conquered in war, in his constant struggle against the European Normans and their allies. Celts generally followed this pattern, when they came from Wales, Scotland or Ireland to America, thus having sons in line for kingship among many Indian tribes. This is too well known a pattern to belabor.

The Madoc myth has been even more exhaustively and authoritatively worked by Gwyn A. Williams. His *Madoc, The Legend of the Welsh Discovery of America*, published by Eyre Methuen, Ltd. and the Oxford University Press in 1979 is the definitive discussion of this legend. It seems to establish the Madoc colonies as fact to be dealt with in any serious discussion of American Indian history. (UL:CH!)

*Sails of Hope, the Secret Mission of Christopher Columbus*, by the famous Israeli Nazi hunter, Simon Wiesenthal, clearly indicates that there were maps extant before Columbus's time showing America. Welsh piratical activities likely yielded to the Bristol ship masters a fair knowledge of whatever facts or rumors circulated regarding continental America before 1492. The schemes of Price Hughes and Thomas Nairne, revealed in Hughe's letters and South Carolina state records, indicate the likely origin of the "Welsh Clanes" who lived as Indians in the Cape Fear Valley, in the early 1600's.

The people of Wales, Cornwall, Devon, Ireland and Scotland always had an ambivalence in their attitude toward the government of England, which was dynastically based in continental Europe. This attitude and the resulting tendency to rebellion resulted in the deaths of untold numbers of unreconstructed "British" (as opposed to Anglo-Saxon English), who longed to see native royalty on the throne of England. Thus Celts in posts of influence with the Indians, and others like the Jeffersons, Henrys, Nairnes, Waynes,

Penns, etc., in high government positions, made the American Revolution a foregone conclusion.

The Welsh tendency to rebellion cost an early John Pate his life in Maryland. It also caused Thoroughgood Pate to escape from debtor's prison in Virginia, live as an Indian on the frontiers of the Rappahannock Valley, and end up in North Carolina's Albemarle-- a. the brother-in-law of the Deputy Lord Proprietor, Nathaniel Chevin. There his son John became a war chief of the Tuscarora's who were friendly to the English. Thoroughgood Pate died in the last year of the Tuscarora War, under circumstances that remain a mystery.

Historical records indicate that Thoroughgood's youngest son William was raised by Nathaniel Chevin, because Thoroughgood's other sons were not deemed able to raise him as his mother, Sarah Chevin, saw fit. This was probably a backhanded allusion to a frontier lifestyle enjoyed by Thoroughgood in previous marriages. My great uncle James Brantley Pate said the early Pates in Wayne County North Carolina were dark people.

Uncle Brantley said he had a picture of his "Indian" ancestors, Leitha and Clint Pate, somewhere, but he never could find it. My cousin Charles saw the picture, but he has not been able to find it since Uncle Brantley's death. Uncle Brantley was named for Sheriff James Brantley Harrison, who was murdered by the notorious Lumbee Indian outlaw Henry Berry Lowrie. This knowledge, and something my mother revealed to me shortly before she died, made the writing of this book inevitable.

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## Nieuw

**Madoc** (Standard: **Madog**) **ab Owain Gwynedd** was, according to folklore, a Welsh prince who discovered America in 1170, over three hundred years before Christopher Columbus's voyage in 1492. Madoc's existence has been the subject of much speculation, though no historical or archaeological evidence of such a man or his voyages has been found in the New or Old World. Most modern historians believe the story of Madoc's American voyage originated with Queen Elizabeth I of England (Queen of England and Queen of Ireland from 17 November 1558 until her death. Sometimes called the Virgin Queen, Gloriana, or Good Queen Bess, Elizabeth was the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor dynasty...)

Elizabeth's advisors around 1580, as a ploy to assert prior discovery, and hence legal possession, of North America by England.

## Background

Madoc's purported father, Owain Gwynedd (alternatively known by the patronymic "Owain ap Gruffydd". He is occasionally referred to as Owain I of Gwynedd, or Owain I of Wales on account of his claim to be King of Wales. He is considered to be the most successful of all the north Welsh princes prior to his grandson), was a real prince of Gwynedd during the 12th century and is widely considered one of the greatest Welsh rulers of the Middle Ages. His reign was fraught with battles with other Welsh princes and with Henry II of England (Henry II, called Curtmantle ruled as King of England, Count of Anjou, Count of Maine, Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, Duke of Gascony, Count of Nantes, Lord of Ireland and, at various times, controlled parts of Wales, Scotland and western France...). At his death in 1170, a bloody dispute broke out between his heirs Dafydd ab Owain Gwynedd (was Prince of Gwynedd from 1170 to 1195. For a time he ruled jointly with his brothers Maelgwn ab Owain Gwynedd and Rhodri ab Owain Gwynedd...), Maelgwn ab Owain Gwynedd (was a prince of part of Gwynedd. Maelgwn was the son of Owain Gwynedd and Gwladus ferch Llywarch ap Trahaearn, and therefore full brother to Iorwerth Drwyndwn, the father of Llywelyn the Great...), and Rhodri ab Owain Gwynedd (was prince of part of Gwynedd, one of the kingdoms of medieval Wales. He ruled from 1175 to 1195. On the death of Owain Gwynedd in 1170, fighting broke out among his nineteen sons over the division of his kingdom...). Owain had at least 13 children from his two wives and several more children born out of wedlock but legally acknowledged under Welsh tradition. According to the legend, Madoc and his brother Rhirid were among them, though no contemporary record attests to this.

The story claims that Madoc was disheartened by this fighting, and he and Rhirid set sail from Llandrillo ([Rhos-on-Sea](#) (Rhos-on-Sea also known as Llandrillo-yn-Rhos in Welsh, or Rhos or Llandrillo, is a seaside resort in Conwy county borough, Wales. It is a mile to the north but effectively a suburb of Colwyn Bay, on the coast of north Wales...)) in the [cantref](#) (A Cantref was a medieval Welsh land division, particularly important in the administration of Welsh law. Land in medieval Wales was divided into cantrefi, which were themselves divided into smaller cymydau. The name "cantref" is derived from "Cant" and "tref") of Rhos to explore the western ocean with a small fleet of boats. They discovered a distant and abundant land where one

hundred men disembarked to form a colony, and Madoc and some others returned to Wales to recruit settlers. After gathering ten ships of men and women the prince sailed west a second time, never to return. Madoc's landing place has been suggested to be west [Florida](#) or [Mobile Bay, Alabama](#), in the [United States](#).

Although the folklore tradition acknowledges that no witness ever returned from the second colonial expedition, the story reports that Madoc's colonists traveled up the vast river systems of [North America](#), raising structures and encountering friendly and unfriendly tribes of [Native Americans](#) before finally settling down somewhere in the [Midwestern United States](#) or the [Great Plains](#).

## Welsh Indians

A later development in the legend claimed the settlers were absorbed by groups of Native Americans and their descendants remained somewhere on the American frontier for hundreds of years.

On November 26, 1608, Peter Wynne, a member of Captain [Christopher Newport](#) (Christopher Newport was an English sailor and privateer. He is best known as the captain of the Susan Constant, the largest of three ships which carried settlers for the Virginia Company in 1607 on the way to found the settlement at Jamestown in the Virginia Colony, which became the first permanent...)s exploration party to the villages of the Eastern [Siouan](#) (The Siouan languages are a Native American language family of North America, and the second largest indigenous language family in North America, after Algonquian. The Siouan family is related to the Catawban family, together making up the Siouan-Catawban family...) Monacan above the falls of the [James River](#) in [Virginia](#), wrote a letter to [John Egerton](#) (John Egerton, 1st Earl of Bridgewater KB, PC was an English peer and politician. The son of the 1st Viscount Brackley and Elizabeth Ravenscroft, he was a Member of Parliament for Callington from 1597 to 1598, and for Shropshire in 1601. Knighted on 8 April 1599, he was Baron of the Exchequer of...), informing him that some members of Newport's party believed the pronunciation of the Monacans' language resembled "Welch", which Wynne spoke, and asked Wynne to act as interpreter. The Monacan were among those non-Algonquian tribes collectively referred to by the Algonquians as "Mandoag". Another early settler to claim an encounter with a Welsh-speaking Indian was the Reverend Morgan Jones, who told [Thomas Lloyd](#) (Thomas Lloyd was a lieutenant-governor of provincial Pennsylvania. He was born in Dolobran, Montgomeryshire, Wales, and subsequently educated at Ruthin School. He studied law and medicine at Jesus College, Oxford, from which he was graduated in 1661...), [William Penn](#) (William Penn was an English founder and "Absolute Proprietor" of the Province of Pennsylvania, the English North American colony and the future U.S. State of Pennsylvania. He was known as an early champion of democracy and religious freedom and famous for his good relations and his treaties with...)s deputy, that he had been captured in 1669 by a tribe of [Tuscarora](#) (The Tuscarora are a Native American people with members in New York, Canada, and North Carolina. The Tuscarora emigrated from the region now known as Western New York to the region now known as Eastern Carolina prior to the arrival of Europeans in North America. They had their first encounter...) called the Doeg. According to Jones, the chief spared his life when he heard Jones

speak Welsh, a tongue he understood. Jones' report says that he then lived with the Doeg for several months preaching the [Gospel](#) in Welsh and then returned to the [British Colonies](#) where he recorded his adventure in 1686. Gwynn Williams comments "This is a complete farrago and may have been intended as a hoax".

Several later travelers claimed to have found the Welsh Indians, and one even claimed the tribe he visited venerated a copy of the Gospel written in Welsh. Stories of Welsh Indians became popular enough that even Lewis and Clark were ordered to look out for them. Folk tradition has long claimed that a site now called "Devil's Backbone" about fourteen miles upstream from [Louisville, Kentucky](#), was once home to a colony of Welsh-speaking Indians. Eighteenth-century [Missouri River](#) explorer [John Evans](#) in Wales took up his journey in part to find the Welsh-descended "Padoucas" or "Madogwys" tribes.

There have been suggestions that the wall of [Fort Mountain](#) (Fort Mountain is a mountain in northern Georgia, just east of Chatsworth. It is part of the Cohutta Mountains, a small mountain range at the southern end of the Appalachian Mountains. It also lies within the Chattahoochee National Forest....) in [Georgia](#) owes its construction to a race of what the [Cherokee](#) termed "moon-eyed people" because they could see better at night than by day. (A competing tradition claims that the wall was built by [Hernando de Soto](#) (Hernando de Soto was a Spanish explorer and conquistador who, while leading the first European expedition deep into the territory of the modern-day United States, was the first European to discover the Mississippi River....) to defend against the [Creek](#) (The Muscogee, also known as the Creek or Creeks, are an American Indian people originally from the southeastern United States. Mvskoke is their name in traditional spelling. Modern Muscogees live primarily in Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. Their language, Mvskoke, is a member of the...) Indians around 1540.) Archaeologists believe the stones were placed there by Native Americans. These "moon-eyed people," who were said to have fair skin, blonde hair and opalescent eyes, have often been associated with Prince Madoc and his Welsh band. [Benjamin Smith Barton](#) (Benjamin Smith Barton was an American botanist and physician. Barton studied at the York Academy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania from 1780 to 1782, then attended the College of Philadelphia, studying medicine under Thomas Shippen from 1784, and accompanying David Rittenhouse on an expedition to survey...) proposed that these "moon-eyed people" who "could not see in the day-time" may have been an albino race. John Haywood also mentioned the legend in his *The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee* although the latter work was an effort to prove that the native tribes of [Tennessee](#) were descendants of ancient [Hebrews](#).

There is also a theory that the "Welsh Caves" in [Desoto State Park](#) (DeSoto State Park is located near in Northeast Alabama, near Fort Payne. Named after Hernando de Soto, it was developed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps after the Great Depression. The park's natural scenery includes more than 3,000 acres of forest, rivers, waterfalls), northeastern [Alabama](#), were built by Madoc's party, since local native tribes were not known to have ever practiced such stonework or excavation as was found on the site.

The legend of the Welsh Indians was apparently not restricted to whites; in 1810, [John Sevier](#) (John Sevier served four years as the only governor of the State of Franklin and twelve years as

Governor of Tennessee, and as a U.S. Representative from Tennessee from 1811 until his death...), the first [governor](#) of Tennessee, wrote to his friend Major [Amos Stoddard](#) (Amos Stoddard Was born on October 26, 1762 to Anthony and Phebe Stoddard in Woodbury, Connecticut. He married Catherine Tallman. He died at Fort Meigs on May 11, 1813, where he was the artillery commander. Before this, he was commandant of Upper Louisiana. He served in the American Revolutionary...) about a conversation he had had in 1782 with the old [Cherokee](#) chief [Oconostota](#) (Oconostota was the Warrior of Chota and the First Beloved Man of the Cherokee from 1775 to 1781.) concerning ancient fortifications built along the [Alabama River](#). The chief allegedly told him that the forts had been built by a white people called "Welsh", as protection against the ancestors of the [Cherokee](#), who eventually drove them from the region. Sevier had also written in 1799 of the alleged discovery of six skeletons in brass armor bearing the Welsh coat-of-arms.

In the early tales, the white Indians' specific European language ranged from [Irish](#) to [Portuguese](#), and the tribe's name varied from teller to teller (often, the name was unattested elsewhere), but later versions settled on [Welsh](#) and the [Mandan](#) (The Mandan are a Native American tribe that historically lived along the banks of the Missouri River and two of its tributaries—the Heart and Knife Rivers—in present-day North and South Dakota...) people, who differed strikingly from their neighbors in culture, language, and appearance. The painter [George Catlin](#) (George Catlin was an American painter, author and traveler who specialized in portraits of Native Americans in the Old West.) suggested the Mandans as descendants of Madoc and his fellow voyagers in *North American Indians* (1841); he found the round Mandan Bull Boat similar to the Welsh [coracle](#), and he thought the advanced architecture of Mandan villages must have been learned from Europeans (advanced North American societies such as the [Mississippian](#) and [Hopewell cultures](#) were not well known in Catlin's time). Supporters of this theory have drawn links between Madoc and the Mandan mythological figure Lone Man, who, according to one tale, provided his people with homes during and after a great deluge.

## Sources of the legend

No detailed account of Madog survives in medieval Welsh literature and, as noted above, there are no contemporary records of him. However, a tradition that Madog was a son or descendant of Owain Gwynedd and that he voyaged to sea is alluded to in a [cywydd](#) (The cywydd is one of the most important metrical forms in Welsh traditional poetry. There are a variety of forms of the cywydd, but the word on its own is generally used to refer to the cywydd deuair hirion as it is by far the most common type. The first recorded examples of the cywydd date from the...) by the Welsh-language poet [Maredudd ap Rhys](#) (Maredudd ap Rhys was a Welsh language poet and priest from Powys. Maredudd composed poems on themes of love, religion and nature. He is thought to have been the bardic tutor to Dafydd ab Edmwnd.-References:...) (*fl.* 1450-83) of [Powys](#) (Powys is a local-government county and preserved county in Wales. Geography: Powys covers the historic counties of Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire, most of Brecknockshire, and a small part of Denbighshire — an area of 5,196 km<sup>2</sup>, making it the largest county in Wales by land area.). The poem addresses a local squire thanking him for a fishing net on a patron's behalf and is not about Madog himself. Madog is referred to as "Splendid Madog... / Of Owain

Gwynedd's line, / He desired not land... / Or worldly wealth but the sea." There are also claims that the Welsh poet and genealogist [Gutun Owain](#) (Gutun Owain was a Welsh language poet. Gutun Owain was born near Oswestry in what is now north Shropshire and was a student of Dafydd ab Edmwnd.) wrote about Madoc before 1492. However, Gwyn Williams in *Madoc, the Making of a Myth*, makes it clear that Madoc is not mentioned in any of Gutun Owain's surviving manuscripts.

A Title Royal was submitted to Queen Elizabeth in 1580 which stated that "The Lord Madoc, sonne to [Owen Gwynned](#) (Owain Gwynedd, alternatively known by the patronymic "Owain ap Gruffydd". He is occasionally referred to as Owain I of Gwynedd, or Owain I of Wales on account of his claim to be King of Wales. He is considered to be the most successful of all the north Welsh princes prior to his grandson.), Prince of Northwales, led a Colonie and inhabited in [Terra Florida](#) or thereabouts" in 1170. An account of Madoc's story appears in George Peckham's *A True Report of the late Discoveries of the Newfound Landes* (1583). It was picked up in [David Powel](#) (David Powel was a Welsh Church of England clergyman and historian who published the first printed history of Wales in 1584)'s *Historie of Cambria* (1584) and [Richard Hakluyt](#)'s *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589). Such stories served to bolster [English](#) claims in the [New World](#).

The New World is one of the names used for the non-Afro-Eurasian parts of the Earth, versus those of Spain; [John Dee](#) went so far as to assert that Brutus of Britain and [King Arthur](#) as well as Madoc had conquered lands in the Americas and therefore their heir [Elizabeth I of England](#) had a priority claim there.

The Welsh Indians were not claimed until over a century later. Morgan Jones' tract is the first account, and was printed by [The Gentleman's Magazine](#) (*The Gentleman's Magazine was founded in London, England, by Edward Cave in January 1731. The original complete title was The Gentleman's Magazine: or, Trader's monthly intelligencer. Cave's innovation was to create a monthly digest of news and commentary on any topic the educated public might be...*) in 1740, launching a slew of publications on the subject. There is no genetic or archaeological evidence that the [Mandan](#) Indians are related to the Welsh, however, and John Evans and Lewis and Clark reported they had found no Welsh Indians. The Mandan are still alive today; the tribe was decimated by a [smallpox](#) epidemic in 1837-1838 and banded with the nearby [Hidatsa](#) (The Hidatsa are a Siouan people, a part of the Three Affiliated Tribes. The Hidatsa call themselves Hiraacá. According to the tribal tradition, the word hiraacá derives from the word "willow"; however, the etymology is not transparent and the similarity to mirahací 'willows' inconclusive) and [Arikara](#) (Arikara refers to a group of Native Americans that speak a Caddoan language. They were a semi-nomadic group that lived on the Great Plains of the United States of America for several hundred years. They lived primarily in earth lodges, used tipis while traveling from their villages) into the [Three Affiliated Tribes](#) (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, also known as the Three Affiliated Tribes, are a Native American group comprising a union of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara peoples, whose native lands ranged across the Missouri River basin in the Dakotas. Hardship, and forced relocations brought them). The Welsh Indian legend was revived in the 1840s and 1850s; this time the [Zuni](#) (The Zuni or A:shiwi are a Native American tribe, one



of the Pueblo peoples, most of whom live in the Pueblo of Zuni on the Zuni River, a tributary of the Little Colorado River, in western New Mexico, United States)'s, [Hopi](#) (The Hopi are American Indians people who primarily live on the 12,635 km<sup>2</sup> Hopi Reservation in northeastern Arizona. The Hopi Reservation is entirely surrounded by the much larger Navajo Reservation. The two nations used to share the Navajo-Hopi Joint Use Area)'s and/or [Navajo](#) (The Navajo or Diné of the Southwestern United States are the second largest Native American tribe of Northern America. In the 2000 U.S. census 298,197 people claimed to be fully or partly of Navajo ancestry. The Navajo Nation constitutes an independent governmental body which manages the Navajo) were claimed to be of Welsh descent, by [George Ruxton](#) (George Ruxton was a British explorer and travel writer who observed the expansion of America in the 1840s. After a short time serving in the British Army, he left to find fortune as a hunter in Canada - spending time observing the relationships between the U.S. Army and the Comanche Indians) (Hopis, 1846), P. G. S. Ten Broeck (Zunis, 1854), and Abbé Emmanuel Domenach (Zunis, 1860), among others. [Brigham Young](#) (Brigham Young was an American leader in the Latter Day Saint movement and a settler of the western United States. He was the president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1847 until his death and was the founder of Salt Lake City and the first governor of Utah Territory) became interested in the supposed Hopi-Welsh connection: in 1858 Young sent a Welshman with [Jacob Hamblin](#) (Jacob Hamblin was a Western pioneer, Mormon missionary, and diplomat to various Native American Tribes of the Southwest and Great Basin. During his life, he helped settle large areas of southern Utah and northern Arizona where he was seen as an honest broker between Mormon settlers and the Natives) to the Hopi mesas to check for Welsh-speakers there. None were found, but in 1863 Hamblin brought three Hopi men to Salt Lake City, where they were "besieged by Welshmen wanting them to utter Celtic words," to no avail. Llewellyn Harris, a Welsh-American Mormon missionary who visited the Zuni in 1878, wrote that they had many Welsh words in their language, and that they claimed their descent from the "Cambaraga" – white men who had come by sea 300 years before the Spanish. However, Harris' claims have never been independently verified.

The Madoc legend survived well into the twentieth century. In 1953, the [Daughters of the American Revolution](#) (The Daughters of the American Revolution is a lineage-based membership organization of women dedicated to promoting historic preservation, education, and patriotism) erected a plaque on the shores of Mobile Bay, Alabama "In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer who landed... in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language." This plaque was later removed by the Alabama Parks Department.

## Later speculation and fiction

Several attempts to confirm Madoc's historicity have been made, but most historians of early America, notably [Samuel Eliot Morison](#) (Samuel Eliot Morison, Rear Admiral, United States Naval Reserve was an American historian, noted for producing works of maritime history that were both authoritative and highly readable. A sailor as well as a scholar, Morison garnered numerous honors, including two Pulitzer Prizes, two Bancroft), regard the story as myth. Madoc's legend has been a notable subject for poets, however. [Welsh language](#) poet T. Gwynn Jones wrote one of his best-known poems, *Madog* (1917), on the subject of Madoc's tribulations

in his native Gwynedd. Although romanticised and imaginative, Jones' portrayal of Madoc is true to medieval Welsh tradition and the hero does not sail to America but is lost at sea in a dramatic storm. The most famous account in English is [Robert Southey](#)'s long poem *Madoc*, which in turn inspired twentieth-century poet [Paul Muldoon](#) (Paul Muldoon is a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet from County Armagh, Northern Ireland as well as an educator and academic at Princeton University) to write *Madoc — A Mystery*. Muldoon's multi-layered poem won him the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. It explores the Madoc legend mostly through association with Southey and [Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#), who in 1794 had played with the idea of going to America to set up an "ideal state".

Novelists have also handled the Madoc legend. [Madeleine L'Engle](#) (Madeleine L'Engle was an American writer best known for her Young Adult fiction, particularly the Newbery Medal-winning *A Wrinkle in Time* and its sequels *A Wind in the Door*, *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*, *Many Waters*, and *An Acceptable Time*. Her works reflect her strong interest in modern science)'s 1978 science fiction novel *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* (*A Swiftly Tilting Planet is a 1978 science fiction novel by Madeleine L'Engle, part of the Time Quartet. In A Swiftly Tilting Planet, Charles Wallace Murry, a very advanced and perceptive child in A Wrinkle in Time and A Wind in the Door, has grown into an adolescent*) imagines a descendant of Madoc who threatens the world with nuclear annihilation. In 1990 and 1991 Pat Winter published the two-volume *Madoc Saga*. Journalist [James Alexander Thom](#) (James Alexander Thom is an American author; he is best known for his works of historical fiction. Born in Gosport, Indiana to Julia and Jay Thom, two medical doctors, he graduated from the Journalism School at Butler University in 1961 and served in the United States Marine Corps in the Korean) also researched Madoc's voyage for his 1995 novel *The Children of First Man*. The fantasy work *Excalibur* (*Excalibur is a 1973 Arthurian fantasy novel by American writer Sanders Anne Laubenthal. It was first published by Ballantine Books as the sixtieth volume of the celebrated Ballantine Adult Fantasy series in August, 1973, and has been reprinted a number of times since*), by American novelist [Sanders Anne Laubenthal](#) (Sanders Anne Laubenthal was an American poet, novelist, historian and textbook writer. Much of her work concerns Mobile, Alabama, of which she was a native. She also wrote about the history of unrecorded areas of Scotland), is set in Mobile and is based on the presumption that Madoc brought [King Arthur](#)'s sword [Excalibur](#) to the New World.

The township of [Madoc, Ontario](#) (Madoc is a township in eastern Ontario, Canada in Hastings County. The township was named after legendary Welsh prince Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd, credited by some with discovering America in 1170), and the nearby village of [Madoc](#) (Madoc is a community in the municipality of Centre Hastings, Hastings County, Ontario, Canada. It is located at the junction of Highway 7 and Highway 62, southeast of Bancroft, halfway between Toronto and Ottawa) are both named in the prince's memory, as are several local guest houses and pubs throughout North America and the United Kingdom. Despite some romantic claims to the contrary, however, the town of [Porthmadog](#) (Porthmadog, known locally as Port, is a small coastal town and community in the Eifionydd area of Gwynedd in Wales. Prior to the Local Government Act 1972, it was in Caernarfonshire. The town lies east of Criccieth, south west of Blaenau Ffestiniog, north of Dolgellau and south of Caernarfon) (meaning "Madoc's Port" in English) and the village of [Tremadog](#) (Tremadog is a village on the outskirts of Porthmadog, in

Gwynedd, north west Wales. It was a planned settlement, founded by William Madocks, who bought the land in 1798) ("Madoc's Town") in the county of Gwynedd are actually named after the industrialist and [Member of Parliament William Alexander Madocks](#) (William Alexander Madocks was a landowner and Member of Parliament for the town of Boston in Lincolnshire from 1802 to 1820), their principal developer, rather than the legendary son of Owain Gwynedd. The *Prince Madog*, a research vessel owned by the [University of Wales](#) and [VT Group](#) (VT Group plc is a British defence and services company formerly known as Vosper Thornycroft. The Company has diversified from shipbuilding into various engineering and support services. VT Group is now involved in many areas of provision through five main operating groups: VT Communications, VT), set sail on July 26, 2001, on her maiden voyage.

A plaque at Fort Mountain State Park (Fort Mountain State Park is a 3,712 acre Georgia state park located between Chatsworth and Ellijay on Fort Mountain. The mountain is named for an ancient 885 foot long rock wall located on the peak. The wall is thought to have been built by area Native Americans either for defense or for...) in Georgia recounts a nineteenth-century interpretation of the ancient stone wall that gives the site its name. The plaque repeats Tennessee governor John Sevier's claim that the Cherokees believed "a people called Welsh" had built a fort on the mountain long ago to repel Indian attacks.

## Fiction

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Thom, James Alexander (James Alexander Thom is an American author; he is best known for his works of historical fiction. Born in Gosport, Indiana to Julia and Jay Thom, two medical doctors, he graduated from the Journalism School at Butler University in 1961 and served in the United States Marine Corps in the Korean.)  
(1994): *The Children of First Man*. New York: Ballantine Books. ISBN 9780345370051

Winter, Pat (1990): *Madoc*. New York: Bantam. ISBN 9780413394507

Winter, Pat (1991): *Madoc's Hundred*. New York: Bantam. ISBN 9780553285215

Lee Waldo, Anna (Anna Lee Waldo is an American historical fiction author. She is most noted for her novel, *Sacajawea*. Biography: Anna Lee Waldo was born in Great Falls, Montana, growing up in Whitefish)  
(1999): "Circle of Stones". New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN 9780312970611

Lee Waldo, Anna (2001): *Circle of Stars*. New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN 9780312203801

L'Engle, Madeleine



Madeleine L'Engle was an American writer best known for her Young Adult fiction, particularly the Newbery Medal-winning *A Wrinkle in Time* and its sequels *A Wind in the Door*, *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*, *Many Waters*, and *An Acceptable Time*. Her works reflect her strong interest in modern science...

(1978): *A Swiftly Tilting Planet*. New York: Dell Publishing. ISBN 0440401585

### Pryce, Malcolm

Malcolm Pryce is a British author, mostly known for his noir detective novels, in the style of Raymond Chandler except that the stories are incongruously transferred from the mean streets of Los Angeles to the rainswept streets of an alternate universe version of the Welsh seaside resort and...

(2005): *With Madog to the New World*. Y Lolfa. ISBN 9780862437589

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### **Juvenile fiction**

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### **Poetry**

Muldoon, Paul (1990): *Madoc: A Mystery*. London: Faber and Faber. ISBN 0-571-14488-8 – New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. ISBN 0-374-19557-9

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expert on medieval Welsh literature in his day, but after his death it was revealed that he had forged a...), Robert Southey and the Madoc legend." In *English romanticism and the Celtic world*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers and Alan Rawes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 69-84.

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## Nieuw

Historical & Mythical:- The name Madoc, although according to the Romances is one of Arthurs twenty-four knights, has also been attributed to Medraut (Mordred), Arthur's illegitimate son by his half sister Morgaine (Morgan). (19) The story of Medraut is in line with the concept of matrilineal succession whereby the kings sister's son becomes the successor. Madoc was later to overthrow Arthur at the battle of Camlann c537 A.D., because of the breakage of his oath to the Avalonian succession. (4) Arthur's title as Pendragon (i.e. empowered by The Dragon through a sacred marriage to the land, in accordance with the Celtic tradition) is confusing; because, although he was the son of Ygerna of the Royal Line of Avalon, his father is recorded as being Uther Pendragon, which denotes a lineage through the male line, more in accord with the Roman tradition. The Dragon emblem was first borne by the King Cunedda of the Votadini, who was said to have hailed from The North, near the present Castle of Bamburgh in Northumbria. (4) Madoc is likely to have been in allegiance to Arthur, and was possibly Maglocunus, nephew of Owain Ddntagwyn "the White Tooth" of Powys. (24)

The Battle of Camlann was fought along the river Camlann at the border between Meirionydd and Powys. There are many other supposed locations for this battle, although after the battle it is not known what happened to Madoc.

However the legend of Madoc's discovery of America was said to have been transposed, by Queen Elizabeth 1 of England, and attributed to a (fictitious?) Madoc ap Owain of 1170 A.D. as propaganda against the Spanish Armada.

However, there is an old Welsh ode:

"Madoc am I,

The son of Owain Gwynedd,  
With stature large and comely grace adorned  
No land at home, nor store of wealth  
My mind was set to search the sea."

*From memory: Meanwhile, King Maelgwn of Gwynedd has refused to submit any tributes to King Cadwaladr and has retreated to Degannwy, on the Creuddyn Peninsular of the Conwy. Maelgwn has stirred up King Cadwaladr's growing unpopularity amongst The Dragon Tribes of Britain. When he learns of the council called together by Gwenhwyvar (Guinevere), in order to forsake The Dragon Oath, Maelgwn plots to abduct the High Queen Gwenhwyvar. The reason for Maelgwn's plans to abduct Gwenhwyvar and hold her to ransom is revenge for his failure to fulfill his ambitions as High King of the Realms, even though he is of the Pendragon Lineage. By doing this he also aims to gain the allegiance of The Dragon Tribes and ultimately to claim the Sovereignty of the Realms.*

*The abduction is carried out and Owain Ddewantgwyn "the White Tooth" is sent to return Gwenhwyvar and to pay the ransom set by Maelgwn. Owain meets with Maelgwn at Degannwy and is offered "hospitality" by having a feast prepared in his "honour." Of course, the wine given to Owain has been poisoned (with hemlock), and he is assassinated. Maelgwn then takes over Owain's Welsh Kingdom of Rhos and adds it to his own Kingdom of Gwynedd.*

*Owain's son Cynlas "the Red" (Cai) rides to the fort of Cadwaladr at Wandlebury Fort, from his usurped Kingdom of Rhos and battle plans are drawn. Maelgwn takes advantage of the unrest amongst The Tribes in order to gain the support of Maglocunus, who is of The Dragon Line of Powys. If he gives this support then Maelgwn will hand back Queen Gwenhwyvar and also make Maglocunus a ruler of Gwynedd.*

*Maglocunus will not consent to this and so he is forced to leave Gwenhwyvar captive. News of this is returned to Cadwaladr.*

*Taliesin however, has his own scheme for the release of the High Queen. He has sent word to Amoryc for the return to Britain of his own son Lleminawg (Lancelot). His son arrives at the royal court at Wandlebury and consents to his father's plan to send him into the fortress of Maelgwn, disguised as a pedlar. Lleminawg enters the castle at Degannwy on the back of a cart, and so passes unnoticed to the chamber where Gwenhwyvar is being held. Lleminawg manages to smuggle Gwenhwyvar out to freedom, having already killed two of Maelgwn's guards. Upon their return to Wandlebury, Gwenhwyvar speaks to Lleminawg of her unhappiness in her role as High Queen and they together engage in a union.*

*Having returned the High Queen to Cadwaladr, Maglocunus and Lleminawg now join forces with Arthur and usurp Maelgwn for his treachery. Later Maelgwn flees from Degannwy to the church of Llanrhos. Here the Vad Velen (yellow pestilence) overcomes Maelgwn and he dies, thus fulfilling Taliesin's prophecy:*

*"A most strange creature will come,  
From the sea marsh of Rhianedd,  
As a punishment of iniquity,  
On Maelgwn Gwynedd.  
His hair, his teeth,  
And his eyes being as gold;  
And this will bring destruction,  
On Maelgwyn Gwynedd."*

*Because the Dragon Line has now been defiled by the abduction of his Queen, Cadwaladyr comes to forsake power of The Dragon and takes to himself the emblem of The Bear instead. Maglocunus cannot stay loyal to Cadwaladyr, because he has now forsaken his name and changed his allegiance from the Dragon Emblem of The Land of Hyperborea, to that of The Bear. Cadwaladyr has now re-named himself as Arthus (YrArth, meaning Great Bear). Because of this, Maglocunus also blames Arthus for weakness in face of his Queen. He leaves Arthus and later fights on the side of Medraut at the Battle of Camlann. Medraut now bears The Emblem of The Dragon himself as he claims the Sovereignty of the Realms. Arthus and Medraut are both killed in this battle and their forces depart. Maglocunus (Madoc), and the rest of Arthus's men behold an apparition of The Holy Grail held by Viviane, The Lady of Avalon. Viviane instructs Madoc to depart from this land of Britain, its sovereignty now broken; and to set sail to the world to the West "beyond the ninth wave."*

*Madoc, his men and also some of the Company of Arthus, united by the vision of the other-worldly Lady Viviane, set sail. Guided on by the apparition of The Grail, they sail until they reach the land mass that became America. The spirit of The Lady of Avalon, bearing the Holy Grail and Sword Excalibur (the sacred regalia) now merges into the new continent for the guidance and spiritual identity of the coming new race. This race is to be first begotten by the Sons and Daughters of Madoc and of the Company of Arthus.*

**Click onto the Grail below to journey on to the  
Etheric Caer of Madoc, above the City of  
Cambridge, England.**

**Nieuw**

# Madoc International Research Association

Investigation into the legend of Prince Madoc

A group that meets regularly in South Wales to discuss their common interest in the legend of Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd's voyages into the Western Ocean around 1170 AD and his possible landing in North America.

**Introduction** (Written by Professor Bernard Knight CBE, President of MIRA)

One of the most enduring legends in the history of Wales is that of Prince Madoc's voyages to the mainland of North America in the 12th century, over three hundred years before Columbus reached the Caribbean.

Unfortunately, in Elizabethan times the story was hi-jacked for political purposes and ever since, historians and patriots alike have wrangled over the likelihood of the legend being true.

Numerous books and even television documentaries have repeatedly dissected the Madoc story, the main-stream academics generally treating it with derision.

Other pages on this site will enlarge upon the details, but the general thrust of the legend is as follows;

- Madoc was one of the many illegitimate sons of Owain Gwynedd, possibly from one of Owain's favourite mistresses, Lady Brenda, a daughter of Lord Hywel of Carno.
- He was born about 1140-50 at Dolwyddelan Castle on the edge of Snowdonia. The present ruined castle is later than this, the original being half-a-mile away at Castell-y-Tomen, still visible as knoll with remnants of stonework.
- He was an expert seaman, possibly from being exiled in Dublin with his part-Viking ancestors. His brother Rhiryd was Lord of Clochran near Dublin.
- When Owain died at the end of 1170, there was violent dissension amongst his many sons over the inheritance of the kingdom.
- Madoc was both in danger from this family feuding and sickened by the unstable conditions in Gwynedd, so he sought an escape.
- He was an experienced sailor, having lived for a time in the Norse city of Dublin, famed for seafaring and ship-building and a frequent haven for fugitive Welshmen. He had Viking blood through his grandmother, Ragnhilde, wife of Gruffydd ap Cynan and grand-daughter of the Norse king of Dublin, Sitric Silkenbeard.
- Madoc built a ship he called the Gwennan Gorn at Abergele on the North Wales coast and together with his brother Rhiryd in his own ship the Pedr Sant, they left from a little creek then called the Afon Ganol at Rhos-on-Sea, later known as Aber Cerrig Gwynion, and sailed out into the Western Ocean.

- Today there is still an old stone quay, now in the garden of 'Odstone', a bungalow at Rhos, as the creek has long silted up. This is at least of medieval origin and now bears a modern plaque reading:

Prince Madoc sailed from here Aber Kerrick Gwynan 1170 a.d. and landed at Mobile Alabama with his ships Gorn Gwynant and Pedr Sant

- On the shore at Point Morgan, Mobile, Alabama, USA, a plaque was erected in 1953 by The Daughters of the American Revolution.

It reads; In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language

(This plaque was later removed, but has recently (2008) been replaced nearby after a large petition by Welsh residents in Alabama)

- Madoc is then supposed to have left some of his party on shore, whilst he and his brother returned to Wales. Here they collected a much larger group of colonists and sailed from Lundy Island at the mouth of the Bristol Channel, intending to reinforce the landing party they had left in Mobile Bay, with the object of settling in the new land, far from the troubles in Gwynedd.

- There is no further news of either Madoc or anyone else. They may have reached Mobile again or perished on the way.

- The second part of the story is based in North America, as the remnants of Madoc's expedition were said to have pushed deep inland up the rivers, including the Ohio, at first fighting the native Indian tribes and eventually becoming assimilated by them. High up along the Missouri River, a small tribe called the Mandans are claimed to be partly descended from the Welsh settlers, differing from the usual Indians in physical appearance and the construction of their villages and coracle-like boats. Their appearance and life-style were recorded in detail in the 19th century by the artist George Catlin.

- The Mandans were almost annihilated in the 19th century by small-pox introduced by European traders, but a few still survive today.

- Several expeditions were sent to investigate the rumours of 'Welsh Indians', both by the Spanish and by the explorers Lewis and Clark, as well as by John Evans, a young Welshman sent by the London Welsh establishment in 1792. There is considerable debate as to the reliability of their negative reports on the existence of Welsh Indians.

- In summary, though there is a complete absence of hard fact to show that Madoc (whose very existence is denied by some historians) reached America, the legend has such resilience in the face of centuries of scepticism, that on the principle that "where there is so much smoke, surely there must be a fire", it certainly cannot be dismissed. The way forward must depend upon archaeological evidence in North America and the use of new DNA techniques to seek genetic links between medieval Celts and native Americans.

- Tudor political scheming and the later often outrageous claims about 'Welsh Indians' has set the historical 'Establishment' scathingly contemptuous of the Madoc story.

(There are several different spellings of Madoc, a common name in medieval Wales – Madoc, Madog, Madauc, Madawch, Madawg, etc)

## **VALIDATING THE LEGEND**

Very scanty evidence of Madoc or his voyages exists in medieval documents.

Richard Deacon's search of the records traced ten Madocs in the time of Owain Gwynedd, but none were Madoc the seaman.

Owain died on 27 November 1170, so there would have been no time for Madoc become disillusioned by subsequent fraternal violence and to sail before the winter of the same year, as the deep-sea sailing season was April to November (but admittedly the internecine trouble started in 1169, so he could have left before his father's death. Richard Deacon says that Owain died in December 1169, but this is presumably an error)

First detailed claims of Madoc the Sailor's voyage appeared in Tudor times – orally by Dr John Dee to Queen Elizabeth and the Royal Council on October 3rd in 1580, then in print in 1583 by Sir George Peckham.

Dee was an extraordinary scholar, astrologer, mathematician and mystic of Welsh parentage and a powerful figure behind the scenes in Elizabethian times. He said "The Lord Madoc, sonne to Owain Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, led a colonie and inhabited in Terra Florida or thereabowts"

A proposal to solve the problem of English Catholics by 'evacuating' them across the Atlantic was prepared by Sir George Peckham and addressed to Queen Elizabeth, his 'True Reporte' carried a preface dated 12 November, 1583, which stated: - 'And it is very evident that the planting there shall in time right ampie enlarge her Majesties Territories and Dominions (or I might rather say) restore to her Highnesse ancient right and interest in those Countries, into the which a noble and worthy personage, lyneally descended from the blood royall, borne in Wales, named Madock ap Owen Gwyneth, departing from the coast of England, about the yeere of our Lord God 1170 arrived and there planted himselfe, and his Colonies, and afterward appeareth in an auncient Welch Chronicle, where he then gave to certaine Llandes, Beastes, and Fowles, sundrie Welch names, as the Lland of Pengwyn, which yet to this day beareth the same.'

Dee's elder contemporary, historian Humphrey Llwyd had translated the old Welsh Chronicles (said to be by Caradoc of Llancarfan?) in 1559, but they were not published until 1584 by Dr David Powell as the 'Historie of Cambria' with a fuller account of the Madoc story. (Caradoc died in 1156, but his chronicles were continued by his monks.)

Powell wrote "Madoc, another of Owain Gwyneth his sonnes left the land in contention betwixt his brethren and prepared certain ships with men and munition, and sought adventures by seas, sailing west and leaving the coast of Ireland so far north that he came to a land unknowen, where he saw manie strange things. This land must needs be some part of that countrie of which the Spaniards affirm themselves to be the first finders. And after he had returned home and declared the pleasant and fruitful countries that he has seen without inhabitants and upon the contrairie

part, for what barren and wild ground his brethren and nephews did murder one another, he prepared a number of ships and got with him such men and women as were desirous to live in quiteness and taking leave of his friends, tooke his journe westwards againe....”

There has been considerable argument as to what ‘leaving the coast of Ireland so far north’ meant; did he mean he sailed north or south of Ireland? If to the north, he would have entered the North Atlantic and current-wise, be unlikely to reach the Caribbean, but rather follow the Viking route to Iceland, Greenland and perhaps Labrador. It seems more likely that he would have followed the southerly route, using the South Equatorial currents, as did Columbus and end up in the West Indies.

Then followed repetitive elaboration of this basic Tudor account, all designed to counter the Spanish claim to the New World. These included Sir Richard Hakluyt’s *Principall Navigaciones* published in 1600 and Sir Thomas Herbert’s 1638 book about his travels.

Any hope of validating the Madoc story requires reputable mentions of it prior to 1493 when Columbus returned to Spain.

### **Modern books on the legend**

*Madoc and the Discovery of America* by Richard Deacon  
Frederick Muller, London, 1967 (pre-ISBN)

The late Richard Deacon was a well-known writer and journalist on the Sunday Times. His book is very pro-Madoc in nature and it must be admitted that some of his facts and assumptions cannot be verified.

*Madoc – the Legend of the Welsh Discovery of America*  
By Professor Gwyn A Williams, 1979 Eyre Methuen Ltd  
paperback 1987, Oxford University Press ISBN 0-19285178-0  
Gwyn Williams, Professor of Welsh History at the University of Wales, Cardiff, has a generally dismissive attitude to the legend, though his book is a masterly piece of academic thoroughness. However, even his acerbic pessimism is broken here and there by shafts of belief, especially in regard to Willem the Minstrel.

*Did Prince Madoc Discover America?* by Michael Senior  
2004, Gwasg Carreg Gwallt, Llanwrst, ISBN 086381 899-4

This is a small paperback directed mainly at the Welsh tourist trade, but an excellent and impartial summary of the major points of the legend

*Madoc – an essay on the discovery of America by Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd* by Thomas Stephens, Longmans, London 1983

Thomas Stephens was the author of the (in)famous essay for the 1858 Llangollen National Eisteddfod. The essay won the competition, but the judges refused to award the prize on the grounds that, as Stephens utterly destroyed the legend in his writing, it did not fulfill the aim of the subject, which was to confirm the legend! His essay has been used repeatedly to refute the Madoc story.



## **Pre-Colombian transatlantic crossings**

- It is now universally accepted that Columbus was not the first European to reach the New World – and that he knew of its existence and probably had crude charts before he left.
- A Bristol merchant, John Day, wrote to Columbus in 1497 and said that Bristol sailors had ‘reached Brasil as long ago as 1477’. ‘Brasil’ then meant a legendary western island or later, any part of America.
- In 1959, Professor Isypernick, a historian at the Uzbek Academy, discovered a secret letter from Columbus to Queen Isabella, revealing that he had a map of new islands made by previous explorers. The Map Curator of the UK Royal Academy confirmed that there had been other such letters; some were in the US Library of Congress and another was found in Turkey half a century ago.
- The close similarity of the 13,000 BP Clovis culture spear-heads in USA, to Solutrean artefacts in France, has even suggested Ice-Age contacts, perhaps by skin-boat along the southern edge of the Atlantic ice-field at a time when the last Ice Age was at its maximum and the Atlantic froze much further south.
- DNA studies have recently suggested a European contribution to what was previously assumed to be the Siberian-Asian origin of Amerinds. Claims that mitochondrial DNA Haplogroup X traits support this theory, have more recently been challenged.
- About 500 BC, Carthaginian admiral, Hanno, sailed for 30 days beyond the ‘Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar), but he probably went down the west coast of Africa.
- Diodorus Siculus, a Greek historian, wrote about 100BC that Phoenicians had discovered ‘a large, sweet, fertile land’ 10000 furlongs (1200 miles) opposite Africa.
- The Irish legend of St Brendan’s 6th century voyage possibly indicates early penetration beyond Iceland or possibly the Canaries and Azores.
- The Viking voyages of around 1000 AD are proven in the Newfoundland settlements at L’Anse aux Meadows.
- John Scolvus is claimed as the steersman of a Danish expedition in 1476 which was said to have reached North America by the Viking Iceland-Greenland route.
- The voyage of the Earl of Orkney, Sir Henry Sinclair to Labrador and Rhode Island in 1398 with the Zeno brothers from Venice is much-disputed, as are claims of carvings of North American plants such as maize in his pre-Colombian Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland
- Basque and Breton fishermen have long fished the Newfoundland grounds.
- Claims that such small vessels could not make such a voyage across the Atlantic are now totally disproven by many such crossings in modern times, such as the 1977 voyage in a leather boat to replicate St Brendan’s venture. Author Richard Deacon himself sailed a flat-bottomed landing craft from Virginia across to North Africa. This ocean has been repeatedly crossed by canoes and other tiny craft.

## **Pre-Columbian References to Madoc**

Llywarch’s ‘Ode to the Hot Iron’ –

Llywarch Prydydd y Moch was a Welsh bard who wrote praises of Owain Gwynedd and his family and in one poem in 1169, protests that he was not the assassin who slew Madoc – but there is no evidence to show that this was ‘our’ Madoc.

Willem the Minstrel – a Flemish author, 12-13th century who had lived in the Welsh Marches and possibly on Lundy, provides one of the most tantalisingly-definite references to Madoc. He wrote a book ‘Reynard the Fox’ which survives, and in it he says he is also the author of a book on Madoc - “Willem, die Madocke makede” (Willem, the author of Madoc)... “Willem who laboured to indite, Madoc in many a wakeful night”

Another Flemish author, Jacob von Maerlant writing about 1270 refers to Willem’s book and says that in his own book ‘there would be no Madoc’s dream, neither Reynards nor Arthur’s pranks”

Willem’s book has been lost, but part of a French translation of a precis of the book was said to have been found in Poitiers in the 17th century, apparently written not later than the end of the 14th century. This stated that Madoc undertook his voyage as a penance laid on him by a bard. The claimed French precis of the book gives considerable detail of Madoc and his activities and if proved to be genuine, would be the most potent support for the legend. Even the great cynic, Professor Gwyn Alf Williams, was impressed by Willem’s role in the search.

Willem says he travelled to Wales, Lundy and probably Herefordshire where he knew the writer-priest Walter Map, who was dead by 1210 and who says knew Willem.

The Poitiers copy says that Madoc was from a noble Welsh family (Owain is not mentioned) whose grandfather was half a Viking. He went on a mission to the court of France disguised as a monk (Owain did send emissaries to Paris, possibly via Lundy). He went on a voyage to find the Fountain of Youth (a persistent Celtic theme) and landed on an island called Ely (an alternative name for Lundy after its patron saint Elen) to look for the magnetic lodestone, which he could safely use on his ship, as it was nailed together with stag horn (Gwennan Gorn, another persistent Welsh legend). Sailing out from Ely, he came to a paradise bathed in sun and a treacherous garden in the sea, suggestive of the Atlantic’s Sargasso Sea - perhaps ‘the warme sea where plants do grow’ of Cynric ap Gronow.

Lundy, the island in the Bristol Channel known as Ynys Wair or Ely, was identified in early Welsh literature with the Fountain of Youth.

Cynric ap Gronow, mid-15th C. poet, made a poem -  
Horn Gwennan, brought to the Gele,  
To be given a square mast,  
Was turned back to Afon Ganol’s quay  
For Madog’s famous voyage

However, we only have this as a 1674 translation by Evan Williams and it cannot be definitely proven to be pre-Columbian. Cynric is alleged later by Sir Thomas Herbert also to have mentioned this ‘a wondrous new lande of strange and delectable fruites, surrounded by a warm sea in which plantes do grow.’

Maredded ap Rhys - 1430-50, priest and bard of Ruabon, makes two firm references to Madoc, a sea-farer and ‘true whelp of Owain Gwynedd’, but the poems were not cited until 1600. He said Madoc was ‘tall of comely face, mild manners, pleasing countenance and fond of sea-roaming’

Deio ap Ieuan Du, a Cardiganshire poet of a slightly earlier date than Mareddud made a similar reference to Madoc son of Owain, but again the written version is post-Columbian.

Ieuan Brechfa, a Carmathenshire bard who flourished about 1450, is said to have written a poem including the words -

Madoc, alive in truth, but slain in name

A name that could be whispered on the waves, but never on the land

However, Professor Gwyn Williams claims this is an 18th century forgery.

G.D.Burtchaell, an Irish antiquarian, mentions Gaelic verses from an old Irish song which claim that Madoc was a Welsh sailor-prince and friend of Dermot MucMurrough, King of Leinster (1110-1171) The words say 'He was learned in the ways of the sea, creator of a ship harder than a curragh ( Celtic skin boat), and who praised the beauty of the sea as he sang to the music of his harp.'

Gutyn Owain – 1468-1498

Reference is made by Dr David Powell in 1584 to Gutyn's mention of second voyage 'with ten sailes'. Powell writes '1170 was the year Madoc went thither...with ten sailes, as I find noted by Gutyn Owen' and

he also says that Madoc left most of his followers in America on his first trip. Again the problem is that Gutyn's dates slightly overlap Columbus in 1493.

The Lundy stone – Richard Deacon claims in his book that in a load of granite that arrived in Barnstaple in 1865, there was a partly-defaced tablet with a carving in old-style Welsh which read 'It is an established fact, known far and wide, that Madoc ventured out into the western ocean, never to return.'

Allegedly, experts who examined it said that script could not have been later than 1300. As the language used was Welsh, it must have pre-dated 1242, when William de Marisco was taken prisoner by Henry II, ending the alliance with the Welsh against the king.

Unfortunately, this vital piece of evidence cannot be authenticated. Deacon claimed that he had been informed of the discovery in a letter from Mr D G Evans of Bristol, but extensive enquiries failed to find this person. At the time, The Lundy Society contacted Deacon for more information, *but he said that all his papers were in America.* (Italics: CH)

Richard Deacon is dead and his papers are *untraced*. The Barnstaple Museum and Devon records have no knowledge of such a find. On 24 July 1967, the Bristol Evening Post published an article on the story and asked for any information about the identity of D G Evans or any trace of the inscribed stone. No response was forthcoming and the truth of the claim must remain in doubt.

There was a short-lived Lundy Granite Company in the 1860's.

A Lundy poem, said to be not later than 15th C, was allegedly found amongst papers by the 19th century owners of the island, the Heaven family. It was in Welsh and stated that the infant Madoc was cast adrift in a coracle (a common fable in many cultures, such as the story of Moses). It went on to say that he became a skilled handler of ships, learning from exile in Ireland. It called him the sailor-magician of Bardsey (an island off the Llyn peninsula in North Wales) and builder of a magic ship that could not sink.

Again, Deacon's account of this is not validated by any references, apart from saying that it is cited in the Gwydir Papers, an archive from North Wales. He says that the author must have

lived not later than the fifteenth century, but gives no reason for this claim.  
The actual part of the poem he quoted was;-

Y twls lle caed Madwg  
Bola croen ar waith bual crwn  
Blwch byrflu (byrflew) tondew tindwn  
Nofiwr o groen anifail  
Noe serchiog foliog o fail  
Llestr rhwyth fal crwth fola croen  
Coflaid o Ledryn cyflo  
Myn Pedr, mae yn lledryn  
Rywigoaeth wyll a dwyll dyn

- but he goes to quote other facts 'later in the poem'.

The Gwydir Papers came from the Wynne family, descended from Owain Gwynedd's second marriage to Christina, but generally the documents relate to the 16th century and later.

### **The Freeman of Wales**

The Icelandic Orkneyinga Saga records under the years 1139-48, frequent attacks by a 'Freeman of Wales' on their settlements in the 'southern isles' including Tyree and the Isle of Man. In retaliation, they attacked Wales and the freeman ran for refuge to Lundy, which he used as base. This seems too early for Madoc, but it proves that Welsh sailors were making frequent voyages around the Irish Sea area at that time –and Lundy crops up once again.

Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr – a bard in Owain's court, around 1150-1200, mentions a Madoc in rather vague terms relating to the sea, the translation of which has various forms. He called Madoc one of Owain's 'teulu', rather than a son; this could mean either a retainer or a relative.

Rev E F Synott – Richard Deacon, whose veracity is sometimes in question, claims that at an auction in Rye (Sussex) 'several years' before Deacon's book was published in 1967, the Rev E.F.Synott, rector of Iden in Kent, purchased some old manuscripts, mouldy and damaged. They appeared to be port records from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, partly in Latin and partly in English. They appeared to be a fragmentary list of ships which had been lost or gone missing. One fragment said ;

Aber Kerrick Guignon, non sunt, Guignon Gorm, Maduac. Pedr Sant, Riryd, Filius Oueni  
Gueneti an.1171

Other ports such as Bristol, Rye, Winchelsea and Milford Haven were listed. There was a cross alongside the Pedr Sant, Rhiryd's ship, but not against Madoc's. Aber Cerrick Gwynion was another name for the Afon Ganol, meaning the 'river mouth of white stones'.

Efforts to trace this alleged document have failed, though the Rev Synott was real enough, being a most colourful character.

### **Physical evidence**

Cynric ap Gronow mentioned Afon Ganol's quay for Madoc's 'famous voyage'.

Afon Ganol (Aber Cerrig Gwynion) is now known to be the silted-up river at Rhos on Sea

(Llandrillo-yn-Rhos) near Colwyn Bay. Details in a law-suit in Stuart times shows it could then take vessels of 30 tons.

The little river has been diverted across the Rhos golf course and the original course lies in the garden of 'Odstone', a bungalow just behind the modern sea wall. In this garden is ancient wharf, medieval or Roman, according to experts. During sea-defence works in 1955, it was found to project out to sea beyond the road across the sea-wall, dividing into two walls, reaching nine feet apart before vanishing. The owner in 1960, Mrs Victor Wilde, wrote to Deacon saying that she had lived there for fifty years and that her father had told her that there was a legend that prince Madoc sailed from there to America.

It now has a small plaque upon it -

Prince Madoc sailed from here Aber Kerrick Gwynan 1170 AD and landed at Mobile, Alabama with his ships Gorn Gwynant and Pedr Sant

Aber Kerrick Gwynion was mentioned in Rev Synott's papers and has also been identified from other sources as in the Llandrillo-yn-Rhos area.

On the shore at Fort Morgan, Mobile Bay, Alabama, the Daughters of the American Revolution erected in 1953, a plaque;

In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind with the Indians, the Welsh language

The site of the landing was claimed by Chief Oconostota to the Governor of Tennessee, John Servier, in 1782, to be a tribal legend.

### **The American side of the story**

The aspect of the legend which has captured most public interest – but also ridicule – is the claim about 'Welsh Indians', i.e. Native Americans who are ethnically related to medieval intruders from Wales. Primarily, the Mandan tribe became the focus of attention.

The story of these claims is fragmented and disjointed, and as with the Tudor version, heavily biased according to the sympathies of the claimants, such as Spanish explorers and those with American or Welsh sympathies. Some were patently nonsensical, such as claims that 'Welsh Bibles' had been seen – when there was no translation until centuries after Madoc's time!

In 1686 the Rev Morgan Jones, a Puritan chaplain to a Major-General in Virginia, wrote to a friend claiming that twenty years earlier, he had been captured in Tuscarora country by the Doegs, an Indian tribe with fair features and was about to be killed. But he prayed loudly to God in Welsh for deliverance, and was suddenly spared, treated as an honoured guest and found he was able to converse freely in Welsh with the natives for the four months of his captivity. In 1739, a Frenchman, La Verendrye, encountered a tribe of Indians on the Upper Missouri 'Whose Fortifications are not characteristic of the Indians... Most of the women do not have Indian features... The tribe is mixed white and black. The women are fairly good looking, especially the light coloured ones; many have blonde or fair hair.' He called them Mantannes, presumably a corruption of 'Mandans'.

There were many such tales of a so-called Welsh tribe; one of interest was a Maurice Griffith who was taken prisoner by the Shawnee Indians in 1764. The Indians eventually befriended him and took him on a hunting expedition to seek the source of the Missouri. High in the mountains they came across 'three white men in Indian dress' with whom they travelled for several days until they arrived at a village where there were others of the same tribe, all having the same European complexion.

A council of this white Indian tribe decided to put the strangers to death and Griffith decided it was time to speak. He addressed them in the Welsh language explaining that they had no hostile intentions but merely sought the source of the Missouri and that they would return to their own lands satisfied with their discoveries. The Chief of the Tribe greeted them in Welsh and they were thereafter treated as guests, staying with the nation some eight months..

In October 1792, a French fur trader, Jacques d'Eglise, travelled over 800 leagues from St Louis up the river and had found a tribe of Indians, the Mandans. There had been earlier rumours of this remarkable tribe, but no one had ever reached them from St Louis. He said that they were 5,000 strong, living in eight, great fortified villages

One story came from Washington in 1801, where Lieutenant Joseph Roberts reprimanded a servant, instinctively using Welsh. An Indian secondary chief was present who was amazed to hear the words and began speaking 'better welsh' than Roberts himself. He told the officer that he came from the Asguawa tribe, 800 miles southwest of Philadelphia and that by custom, their children were made to use this language until they were twelve years of age. He said the tribe had a tradition that they came from very far in the east, over great waters.

John Sevier, Governor of Tennessee, wrote to a Major Stoddard of the U.S. Army about a discussion he had had with the Major Chief of the Cherokee, Oconostota, in 1792. The venerable old chief informed him that, according to his forefathers, the white people who had formerly inhabited the country had made ancient fortifications on the Highwassee River now called Carolina. A battle took place between the Whites and the Cherokees at the Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River. After a truce and exchange of prisoners, the Whites agreed to leave the area, never to return, eventually settling 'a great distance' up the Missouri.

The Chief's ancestors claimed 'they were a people called Welsh and they had crossed the Great Water'. Governor Sevier also claimed to have been in the company of a Frenchman who informed him that he had been high up the Missouri and 'he had traded with the Welsh tribe; that they certainly spoke much of the Welsh dialect, and though their customs were savage and wild, yet many of them, particularly the females, were very fair and white.'

Stoddard did not reveal this correspondence until he wrote a book some thirty years later.

George Catlin, a Pennsylvania lawyer, spent six years travelling extensively amongst the native peoples of North America. He wintered with the Mandans in 1832. He was most taken by 'so many peculiarities in looks and customs.' He ascertained that one in ten or twelve of the whole tribe had light hair and that it was a hereditary characteristic, which ran in families. He produced numerous paintings of the tribe and wrote prolifically about them. He compared their canoes to Welsh coracles and eventually, after further research, firmly believed the Madoc story.

Dana Olson, author of another book about Madoc, places great emphasis on the stone forts located along the Tennessee and its tributaries and claims that the White Indians were ambushed at Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River, but also relates about a great battle at the Falls on the Ohio, where Louisville now stands. He also tells many tales of finds of skulls, coins, armour, breastplates and helmets but none of these can be traced for examination.

There are at least five stone 'forts' around the Chattanooga area of Tennessee, claimed by many to be the work of Europeans. One Kentucky surveyor came to Wales and found similarities between the layout of the stonework at Lookout Mountain and Dolwyddelan Castle in North Wales - but unfortunately, the latter would not have been built at the time of Madoc

There is a mass of description and supposition about these stone forts, which everyone agrees are pre-Columbian – but unfortunately, they are also pre-Madoc, as carbon dating has established that organic material associated with them dates from between AD 30-430. Established archeologists see no problem in assigning them to the Middle Woodland Indians and think they are not defensive structures, but boundaries around ritual sites.

### **John Evans**

The best-known attempts to find the 'Welsh Indians' was the quest of John Evans, a young Welsh Methodist from Waunfawr in Snowdonia, who went at the behest of the London Welsh community in 1792, within twenty pounds donated towards his sea passage. Iolo Morgannwg (Edward Williams) was supposed to have gone with him, but for some obscure reason, Evans went alone.

The story is long and complex, but with virtually no funds except the charity of Welsh nonconformists along the way, he travelled hundreds of miles through wild country and along the great rivers, down the Ohio and up the Mississippi and Missouri, making useful maps of this unknown country. After several misfortunes, he linked up with a Scotsman, James Mackay, who was a Spanish agent and travelled with him. He reached the Mandans and lived with them for a winter. Then in failing health, exacerbated by drinking, he died at the age of 29. He wrote a letter to Dr Samuel Jones in Philadelphia, saying that he had found no sign of any Welsh Indians, though this has been contested as by then he was in the pay of the Spaniards, who had earlier captured him as a spy and it was in their interests for him to deny that Spain might have any prior claim to the land.

His words were – 'Thus having charted and explored the Missouri for 1800 miles and by my communications with the Indians this side of the Pacific ocean from 39 to 45 degrees Latitude, I am able to inform you that there is no such People as Welsh Indians.'

### **Lewis and Clarke**

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson, himself of Welsh origin, sent two army officers, Lewis and Clark, to lead an expedition to cross the continent to the Pacific. They were the first Americans to succeed, though a Canadian had done it several years earlier. Lewis and Clark were asked to look out for any 'Welsh Indians' and spent some time with the Mandans, but reported that they found no sign of any Welsh-speaking Indians.

### **The Mandans**

These were originally a large tribe of Plains Indians, living on the Upper Missouri, towards what would become the Canadian border. By many accounts, they are certainly unusual amongst the

native tribes, both in their appearance and life-style.

They were not nomadic, but lived in settled villages. The first recorded European contact was by Frenchman Sieur de la Verendrye in 1738, who was deliberately following up previous reports from fur-traders and missionaries as far back as 1721. Lewis and Clarke found them in 1804 and claimed there were about 1250 surviving.

The best description comes from Catlin, who lived among them. He does not mention their fair complexion at first, as others have done, but was struck by their difference from other Indian tribes he knew. They claimed to be the first people on earth, with strange legends about their origins. They lived in large circular lodges, half-buried in the ground and used circular boats like coracles, rather than the usual Indian canoes.

It seems that Catlin did not know of the Madoc legend at first, though later he seizes upon it. Nowhere does he claim that they have any European connections, though later in his copious writings, he tentatively puts forward a suggestion that there might be a Madoc connection and takes a particular interest in comparing the Mandan vocabulary with Welsh. He mentions that they have the art of making blue glass beads – these were also said to have been made on Lundy and used in the Scilly Isles, but such bead making has no particular geographical connotations. The linguistic aspects have been endlessly debated but though there are some striking congruence of words, the evidence is poor and no better than many such comparisons between languages world-wide.

In 1838, the tribe was effectively wiped out by small-pox introduced by fur-traders and the small remnants were taken as slaves by the Ricarees, then almost exterminated by the Sioux. Any remaining were absorbed by the Hidatsa tribe in North Dakota and today it is doubtful if any full-blooded Mandan survives, though a few claim at least partial descent.

### **Major criticisms of Madoc story**

Most of the historical ‘Establishment’ dismiss the story, partly on grounds of the paucity of pre-Colombian evidence for his existence and the strong political motives of the Tudors to promote the legend.

Thomas Stephens’s destructive essay at the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod is often used by critics of the legend. Stephens, a Merthyr chemist, won the eisteddfod prize, but the award was withheld on the grounds that the conditions of the essay were to the effect that Madoc did discover America and Stephens’s essay disproved it.

Professor Gwyn ‘Alf’ Williams’ 1979 book ‘Madoc - the making of a myth’ - is masterly but generally hostile, though he offers snippets of supportive information, being especially impressed by the Willem the Minstrel material.

### **REASONABLE CONCLUSIONS**

In spite of the political ‘spin’ of the Tudors which bedevils the Madoc story, there seems enough historical ‘smoke’ to suggest that there was some sort of fire! It is surely too complex and detailed a story to have been invented without a shred of substance behind it.

Like much of historical record, most of the alleged written sources have been lost since medieval times, e.g. Willem the Minstrel’s book ‘Madoc’



Even Professor 'Gwyn Alf' agrees that between the 12th and 15th centuries, there was a well-known story circulating in Wales (and further afield in France and the Low Countries)) of a son or retainer of Owain Gwynedd, who was an expert mariner and who ventured out into the Western Ocean.

The 'Indian' end of the story is much more speculative and much is obvious fantasy. The Mandan tribe might reasonably be assumed to have some European blood, but this may have come from other pre- or post-Colombus intrusion.

The only way forward now is to pursue DNA studies, but given the current embargo on research on Native American bones by the US 1990 legislation, the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), this will be difficult.

(This version of the legend was written by Professor Bernard Knight CBE, President of MIRA and is his personal opinion)

## **Nieuw**

A number of stories, legends, and myths have developed around the Falls area specifically and the Ohio River Valley generally over time. Even religious beliefs of some faith traditions have intimate ties with the prehistory of the region. The more salient of these are described below. Where it exists, references for further reading are provided within each section.

These stories and related references and links are provided for the interest of our membership and readers. They do not represent the opinions of the FOAS; nor is it our intent to belittle or demean the religious beliefs or serious research of any group of people. However, they form part of the oral history and tradition of the region, and as such, have something to say about its history. They are not presented as "truth" or even as possibility. They are what they are. The origin of some derive from actual historical events; most seek to explain the unexplainable. At worst, these are fanciful imaginings that came into existence as a means to promote some agenda; at best, these are accounts which cannot be – or have not yet been – proven scientifically. Examine them critically, with a mind to the supporting evidence.

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### **Madoc of Wales and Devil's Backbone in Clark County, Indiana**

One of the most deeply entrenched legends of the area has to do with Prince Madoc of Wales and a supposed stone fortress atop Devils Backbone at Fourteen Mile Creek in Clark County, Indiana.

See:

*Prince Madoc: Founder of Clark County, Indiana* by Dana Olsen(1987). Published by the author.

*Madoc & The Discovery of America* by Richard Deacon (1966). George Braziller Publishers, New York.

*Visionaries, Adventurers, and Builders, Historical Highlights of the Falls of the Ohio. Chapter 2: Prince Madoc: Another Side of the Story* by Carl E. Kramer (1999). Sunnyside Press, Jeffersonville, Indiana.

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## **The Legend of Sand Island and the White Indians**

See: *The Legend of Sand Island*, The Louisville Times Scene, July 21, 1979, Pages 3-5.

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## **The Brandenburg Stone**

See: (on file at the FOAS lending library)

A Welsh Artifact in Kentucky? *Ancient American*, Issue # 19/20

Brandenburg Stone Update, by Lee Pennington, *Tale Trader*

Ancient Stone on Loan to Museum, by Ben Schnieder, *Tribune*, Clarksville

Presentation reveals the mystery of Brandenburg Stone, by Jon Reiter

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Prince Madoc of Wales landed at Mobile Bay, and set out to explore the lands north. On the way, he built several forts. The first fort, erected on top of Lookout Mountain, near DeSoto Falls, Alabama, was found to be nearly identical in setting, layout, and method of construction, to Dolwyddelan Castle in Gwynedd, the birthplace of Madoc.

The situation of the forts, blended with the accounts given by the Indians of the area, has led to a plausible reconstruction of the trail of Madoc's colonists. The settlers would have traveled up the Alabama River and secured themselves at the Lookout Mountain site, which took months, maybe even years to complete. It is presumed the hostility of the Indians forced them to move on up the Coosa River. See below for the rest of the story.

DeSoto Falls is viewed along a 12-mile road which edges Little River Canyon. The falls plunge 104 feet from below DeSoto Lake. The canyon, deepest gorges east of the Mississippi River, run 16 miles within DeSoto State Park. The river flowing through it forms and flows on top of a mountain before entering Weiss Lake. Dense woodlands, seasonal wildflowers, the largest crop in the world outside of China, and spectacular views. Address: P.O. Box 210, Fort Payne, AL. 35967 205 845-5380, 800 568-8840

In the pioneer spirit of the explorer, DeSoto Park rangers over 5,067 acres along Little River. Accented by rushing waterfalls and fragrant wildflowers, the park enhances the pioneer spirit with a unique restaurant, resort and cabin facilities. Also nestled into the lush, green mountain foliage of Lookout Mountain, the park provides a modern campground, laundry and camp store as well as a picnic area, swimming pool, tennis courts, nature center and many miles of hiking trails. Along the extensive scenic drive in the park, you can photograph DeSoto Falls, Little River Falls, and many magnificent vistas along Little River Canyon; the deepest canyon east of the Mississippi River.

*Locations of similar walls*

**Stone Mountain, Dekalb Co.  
Alec Mountain, Habersham Co.  
Sand Mountain, Catoosa Co.  
Ladd Mountain, Bartow Co.  
Rocky Face, Whitfield Co.  
Pigeon Mountain, Dade County  
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee  
Ft Mountain State Park, Georgia**

***A CONSIDERATION: WAS AMERICA DISCOVERED IN 1170 by PRINCE MADOC AB OWAIN GWYNEDD OF WALES?***

**By: Jayne Wanner**

History, not unnaturally, tends to be written by historians, but seldom by geographers, or seamen, or interpreters of legend, and much of the early history of the world has suffered in consequence

In 1170 A.D., a certain Welsh prince, Madoc ab Owain Gwynedd, sailed away from his homeland, which was filled with war and strife and battles between his brothers. Yearning to be away from the feuds and quarrels, he took his ships and headed west, seeking a better place. He returned to Wales brimming with tales of the new land he found--warm and golden and fair. His tales convinced more than a few of his fellow countrymen, and many left with him to return to this wondrous new land, far across the sea.

This wondrous new land is believed to be what is now Mobile Bay, Alabama. Time has left several blank pages between the legend of Madoc and the "history" of America, with its reports of white Indians who speak Welsh, and these blank pages have been the subject of much controversy in certain circles over the five centuries since Columbus discovered the New World.

Although in 1500 it may have made a significant difference exactly who first discovered--and therefore lay claim to--the North American Continent, that time has passed. In 1999, the relevance of the subject rests in the area of its interest to a student of history, rather than its significance to the world. This admission made, the story of Madoc, and the chronicle of the "Welsh Indians" will be explored, and the connection between the two will be considered for its place in that blank chapter of history.

Owain Gwynedd, succeeded his father, Gruffydd ap Cynan as ruler of the Gwynedd province of Wales in 1138. His thirty-two-year reign was a bloody and turbulent time of constant warfare between the Norman barons and the Welsh chieftans. Though he strived during his rule for both the prosperity of his people and the unity of all Welsh kingdoms against the English. His aims

were hindered by the treacherous feuding within his own ranks. Although well known for his "...*fierce and brutal penalties for disloyalty...*", he was nevertheless remembered as a mighty soldier and a great leader by his own people, and considered the "*King of Wales*" by those in England and other lands.

Owain was said to have had seventeen sons, including Madoc, and at least two daughters, although few were considered legitimate by the churchmen of the time. This confused situation led to bitter dispute as to who among his sons would succeed him and his death in 1169 plunged his country into civil war.

It was this civil war from which Madoc fled. His story was repeated by bards and recorded throughout the next four centuries by various historians, but concise and detailed accounts would not be found until after the introduction of printing. Perhaps the earliest printed account of Madoc's story is from Dr. David Powel's *The Historie of Cambria* published in 1584:

*Madoc ... left the land in contention betwixt his brethern and prepared certain shipps with men and munitions and sought adventures by seas, sailing west. . .he came to a land unknown where he saw manie strange things... Of the viage and returne of this Madoc there be manie fables faimed, as the common people do use in distance of place and length of time, rather to augment than diminish; but sure it is that there he was... And after he had returned home, and declared the pleasant and fruitfulle countries that he had seen without inhabitants, and upon the contrarie part, for what barren and wilde ground his brethern and nepheues did murther one another, he prepared a number of shipps, and got with him such men and women as were desirous to live in quietnesse, and taking leave of his freends tooke his journie thitherward againe... This Madoc arriving in the countrie, into which he came in the yeare 1170, left most of his people there, and returning back for more of his own nation, acquaintance, and friends, to inhabit that fayre and large countrie, went thither againe.*

Madoc's story was related in *A Brief Discription of the Whole World* (1620); a version was told by Sir Thomas Herbert in the last section of his *Relation of Some Years Travaile* (1626), based on what Sir Thomas said were records of "*200 years agoe and more*". The Dutch writer Hornius tells of Madoc in *De Originibus Americanis* (1652); and Richard Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* (1600) establishes the fact that the story of Madoc existed before the time of Columbus.

Hakluyt, a geographer as well as an historian, had a reputation for being a perfectionist. His work is thoroughly researched and supported by foreign as well as British sources.

Gutyn Owen was a renowned Welsh historian and geneologist with a well documented career and a number of famous works of Welsh literature to his credit. His writings are cited as sources of Madoc's story by a number of authors, and the fact that his account of Madoc was written before 1492 "... *refutes the criticism that the Madoc story was brought forward after 1492 in order that Great Britain could claim prior rights to the new world.*"

Among the writings of Madoc's story are found suppositions of his landing in the West Indies, in Mexico, and in the Alabama-Florida region of North America. The scope of this paper dictates pursuit of the latter theory – more specifically, Mobile Bay, Alabama.

The choice of Mobile Bay as Madoc's landfall and the starting point for his colonists is grounded in two main areas. One is the logical assumption that the ocean currents would have carried him into the Gulf of Mexico. Once there and seeking a landing site, he would have been attracted to the perfect harbor offered in Mobile Bay, as were later explorers Ponce de Leon, Alonzo de Pineda, Hernando de Soto, and Amerigo Vespucci.

The second, and more convincing reason, is a series of pre-Columbian forts built up the Alabama River, and the tradition handed down by the Cherokee Indians of the "*White People*" who built them. Testimony includes a letter dated 1810 from Governor John Seiver of Tennessee in response to an inquiry by Major Amos Stoddard. The letter, a copy of which is on file at the Georgia Historical Commission, recounts a 1782 conversation Sevier had with then 90-year-old Oconosoto, a Cherokee, who had been the ruling chief of the Cherokee Nation for nearly sixty years. Seiver had asked the Chief about the people who had left the "fortifications" in his country. The chief told him: "they were a people called Welsh and they had crossed the Great Water." He called their leader "Modok." If true, this fits with the known history of 12th century Welsh Prince Madoc. He further related: "*It is handed down by the Forefathers that the works had been made by the White people who had formerly inhabited the country...*" and gave him a brief history of the "*Whites*." When asked if he had ever heard what nation these Whites had belonged to, Oconostota told Seiver that he "*... had heard his grandfather and father say they were a people called Welsh, and that they had crossed the Great Water and landed first near the mouth of the Alabama River near Mobile...*"

Three major forts, completely unlike any known Indian structure, were constructed along the route settlers arriving at Mobile Bay would have taken up the Alabama and Coosa rivers to the Chattanooga area. Archaeologists have testified that the forts are of pre-Columbian origin, and most agree they date several hundred years before 1492. All are believed to have been built by the same group of people within the period of a single generation, and all bear striking similarities to the ancient fortifications of Wales.

The first fort, erected on top of Lookout Mountain, near DeSoto Falls, Alabama, was found to be nearly identical in setting, layout, and method of construction, to Dolwyddelan Castle in Gwynedd, the birthplace of Madoc.

The situation of the forts, blended with the accounts given by the Indians of the area, has led to a plausible reconstruction of the trail of Madoc's colonists. The settlers would have traveled up the Alabama River and secured themselves at the Lookout Mountain site, which took months, maybe even years to complete. It is presumed the hostility of the Indians forced them to move on up the Coosa River, where the next stronghold was established at Fort Mountain, Georgia. Situated atop a 3,000 feet mountain, this structure had a main defensive wall 855 feet long, and appears to be more hastily constructed than the previous fort. Having retreated from Fort Mountain, the settlers then built a series of minor fortifications in the Chattanooga area, before moving north to the

forks of the Duck River (near what is now Manchester, Tennessee), and their final fortress, Old Stone Fort. Formed by high bluffs and twenty-foot walls of stone, Old Stone Fort's fifty acres was also protected by a moat twelve hundred feet long. Like the other two major defense works, Old Stone Fort exhibits engineering proficiency well beyond the skills of the Indians.

The trail of the settlers becomes more speculative with the desertion of Old Stone Fort. Chief Oconostota, in relating his tribal history, tells of the war that had existed for years between the White people who had built the forts and the Cherokee. Eventually a treaty was reached in which the Whites agreed to leave the area and never return. According to Oconostota, the Whites followed the Tennessee River down to the Ohio, up the Ohio to the Missouri, then up the Missouri *"... for a great distance... but they are no more White people; they are now all become Indians..."*

Chief Oconostota's testimony has been very thoroughly followed up by later historians, and several points have been corroborated with other reports of *"bearded Indians"* and their trek upriver in retreat from hostile natives. Throughout the years *"... there was abundant evidence... that travelers and administrators had met Indians who not only claimed ancestry with the Welsh, but spoke a language remarkably like it."*

It must be assumed that the remaining settlers were eventually assimilated by Indians, and that by the early eighteenth century very few traces of their Welsh ancestry remained. Although several tribes have been considered as possible descendants of the Welsh settlers, the most likely is the Mandan tribe, who once inhabited villages along tributaries of the Missouri River.

These Mandan villages were visited in 1738 by a French explorer, The Sieur de la Verendrye, and he kept a detailed journal describing the people and their villages. At the time of Verendrye's visit, the tribe numbered about 15,000 and occupied eight permanent villages. The Mandan chief told him that the tribe's ancestors had formerly lived much farther south but had been driven north and west by their enemies. Verendrye described the Mandans as *"white men with forts, towns and permanent villages laid out in streets and squares."* He indicated that their customs and lifestyle were totally different from other tribes he had encountered, and was the first of many to remark about the beards of their men, the grey hair of their older people, and the magnificent beauty of their women! The Mandans had several visitors throughout the next century, (including Louis and Clark in 1804), each one reiterating the striking differences in their culture and appearance.

The Mandans had been repeatedly driven out of their villages and forced upriver by their continual conflicts with the Sioux. By the 1830s, when George Catlin made his memorable visit, their numbers had decreased by two thirds. Catlin spent several years living with, studying, and painting various Indian tribes, and in 1841 published his classic work: *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Condition of the North American Indians*.

He devoted sixteen of his fifty-eight chapters to the Mandans, explaining:

*I have dwelt longer on the history and customs of these people than I have or shall on any other tribe... because I have found them a very peculiar people.*

*From the striking peculiarities in their personal appearance, in their customs, traditions, and language, I have been led conclusively to believe that they are a people of a decidedly different origin from that of any other tribe in these regions.*

Catlin was so impressed by these differences that he speculated that the Mandan tribe could very well be the remains of the lost colony of Madoc. Although he had no Welsh ancestry himself, and no particular motivation for pursuing this theory, he went to great effort to investigate their origin and traced their migration up the Missouri and Ohio Rivers.

His book contains several pages, including a vocabulary comparing numerous Mandan and Welsh words, in support of his theory. He reflects, "If my reasons do not support me, they will at least be worth knowing, and may be the means of eliciting further and more successful enquiry."

When Catlin left the Mandans in August, 1833, he did not know his would be the last, and probably most important, account of the Mandan tribe. They had survived a trans-Atlantic voyage; they had survived the Cherokee; they had survived an eighteen-hundred mile migration; they had even managed to survive the Sioux. Like so many other Indian tribes, they did not survive the smallpox epidemic introduced to them by traders in 1837. Now considered extinct, the Mandans do however, lay claim to the distinction of being the only Indian tribe never to have been at war with the United States.

Throughout the centuries, scholars and historians have argued for and against the Madoc story. The classic work denying the entire idea was written in 1858 by the distinguished Welsh scholar, Thomas Stephens. So thorough and detailed was his essay, it was considered the best work submitted for a competition held on the subject. Ironically, his prize was denied as his article refuted the theme rather than proved it.

Current naysayers include Samuel Eliot Morison, who emphatically dismisses the entire subject as nothing more than a fable. He accepts no connections between the White Settlers and the Chattanooga area forts. He renounces all associations linking the tales of the Welsh Indians to the Mandans, acknowledging only the report of John Evans indicating that he met no Welsh speaking Indians when he spent one winter with the Mandans in the 1790s.

Although Evans' character itself and motives for the report are questionable, Morison embraces his brief findings, while only mentioning George Catlin in his bibliography, stating that his *Notes and Letters* "... gave the legend a new lease on life. . .with phony comparative vocabulary." Where Richard Deacon devotes an entire book to detailed research on the subject, Morison only mentions it in his notes, indicating that Deacon "... pulls all the travelers' tales together... he feels there must be something in it, but cannot say what."

He attributes the claim of discovery to the eagerness of the Tudor court historians (of Welsh descent) "... to claim priority over Spain in the New World."

His basic attitude may be summarized with the following line: "As Bernard De Voto well observed, the insubstantial world of fairies and folklore is as real as the visible world to Celtic peoples."

Not everyone shares Morison's view, for in November, 1953 a memorial tablet was erected at Fort Morgan, Mobile Bay, Alabama by the Virginia Cavalier Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which reads:

*In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language.*

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## Nieuw

### Related articles from newspapers, magazines, and more

"GOD ne'er brings to pass such things for nought": empire and Prince Madoc of...

Magazine article from: Early American Literature; January 1, 2009; 700+ words In 1734, a poem titled "Upon Prince **Madoc's** Expedition to the Country now called...its subject, in the year 1170 A.D., **Madoc**, the youngest son of Welsh ruler Owain...brothers after the death of their father. **Madoc** sailed west from Wales across the great...

**Madoc** as myth and history

Newspaper article from: Chicago Sun-Times; May 1, 1988; 700+ words ...more precisely, the myth surrounding him - is **Madoc** (Oxford University Press, \$8.95). **Madoc**, the legend goes, was a Welsh prince who wanted...of "evidence" concerning the elusive Prince **Madoc**, as well as the lunacies that have been carried...

The Truth: **Madoc** 1.(News)

Newspaper article from: Western Mail (Cardiff, Wales); March 9, 2004; 700+ words ...King Arthur, say the South Walian prince **Madoc** Morfran sailed in 562AD and made the discovery. **Madoc** made his journey after a comet hit the Earth... doubt the academic theory which says another **Madoc**, the son of Owen Gwynedd, sailed to North...

## Nieuw

Welsh Prince Madoc in America (dateline: Jan 26, 2005 - 16:06)

### *Who discovered America?*

The row over who discovered America has erupted again with claims that it was not Christopher Columbus nor even a Welsh prince 400 years earlier.

But historians are claiming that the true winner of the race to America was Welsh, and was a prince. But they say it happened in the sixth century, not the 12th.

Alan Wilson and Baram Blackett , who are leading experts on King Arthur, say the South Walian prince Madoc Morfran sailed in 562AD and made the discovery.

Madoc made his journey after a comet hit the Earth in the 500s, which Welsh scientists say caused famine and disease during that century.

It throws into doubt the academic theory which says another Madoc, the son of Owen Gwynedd, sailed to North America in 1170. It also predates Columbus's voyage in 1492.

Mr Wilson, from Cardiff, and Mr Blackett, from Newcastle, who have published five books on Welsh ancient history, claim British-style hill forts exist in Ohio, and that Welsh became integrated into Native American languages.

**They say their research is backed up by records of Native American history which tell of a race of white men arriving in America around that time, as well as discoveries of Caucasian-like skeletons around Ohio.**

**Mr Wilson said, "There are old-style Welsh hill forts around the Ohio River valley that are patterned as they are in Britain. They have a lot of inscriptions out there, carved in caves and on artifacts which are in coelbren, the old Welsh alphabet mainly recorded in South-East Wales. The idea is that Madoc did go to America; the question then is, 'Which Madoc?' These voyages are described as mystical. There was a strange belief in the 19th century that the ancient British believed in another world. But that was what the Spanish called the New World."**

**Mr Wilson believes Madoc sailed across the Atlantic from Milford Haven, arriving in Newfoundland and sailing down the coast along Massachusetts and then around Florida.**

**The Welsh explorers then sailed to the Gulf of Mexico and joined the Mississippi River before continuing along the Ohio River and settling in Kentucky.**

**Mr Wilson said, "We are working with the Americans on this and what they are saying is the ditches around the mounds have been slowly filled in and they are getting down to the original level of the ditches where sixth century material is coming out. There is so much evidence. What we are saying is that this should be looked at. Madoc came back after 10 years, he then describes in well-known poetry this place he discovered. It is no good dismissing it as fairy tales, it must be done as clinically and honestly as we can. We are not jumping up and down and saying this should be believed straightaway, but there is very strong evidence. It is quite a story. Everybody forgets the Native American history which says a nation of white men arrived."**

**Astronomers at Cardiff University this year announced that the cause of poor crops and starvation in the 6th Century was a comet hitting the Earth.**

**Mr Wilson said Mr Blackett and he had made the discovery in the 1980s.**

**The comet caused a massive explosion in the upper atmosphere.**

**Debris from the giant blast enveloped the earth in soot and ash, blocking out the sunlight and causing the extremely cold weather - as would happen after an all-out nuclear war.**

**Mr Wilson added, "The affect of the massive catastrophe caused by debris from a comet falling on Britain in 562 AD calls for a re-writing of British history."**

***(Story originally published by: The Western Mail via icWales, Cardiff / Wales | Aled Blake - Mar 9.04)***

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## Nieuw

Madoc and John Dee: Welsh Myth and Elizabethan Imperialism

an article from the *Elizabethan Review* by **Robert W. Barone**

*Robert W. Barone is  
Associate Professor  
of History at the University of Montevallo*

The line that separates history and myth is often a perilous one that, more often than not, goes undetected by most people. In fact most people remain quite content to accept myth as history without stopping to give any deeper consideration to the topics or issues at hand. Every historian, however, is bound by his or her discipline to demythify history, to separate the fact from the fallacy. This act is what separates the historian from the antiquarian or propagandist. Antiquarians, and most people, are quick to accept propaganda—which is more often than not myth—as fact. This creates, what William McNeill has referred to as, mythistory<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately for historians the myths themselves often become a part of history, embellishing it to serve national, religious, racial, or moral ends. What American would deny that George Washington cut down a cherry tree, and could not tell a lie? Or what Englishman would refute the tales of Robin Hood? In the end myth can sometimes have a greater impact on people's minds and imaginations than the actual history. Another way of expressing this sentiment is to say that what actually occurs in history is sometimes less important than what people believed happened. And what is believed can be a powerful force in motivating people to action. The myths of history can help in forging the attitudes people have about their culture, government, religion, and position in the world.

The Madoc myth is a case in point.<sup>2</sup> A marginal story handed down by Welsh bards from the late twelfth century, it was not until the sixteenth century that the story was put into writing.<sup>3</sup> It was at that point that the tale was seized upon by Elizabethan Empire builders and utilized in their arguments supporting British claims to the North American continent. John Dee, an Elizabethan polymath, was one of the first to seize upon the legend of Madoc and incorporate it into his polemical arsenal justifying British claims in the New World. Dee himself was a somewhat shadowy figure, whose interests moved him from the more practical interests he had in navigation, cartography, and mathematics, to more mystic esoteric occultist endeavors in conjuring up spirits. The former studies placed Dee in the vanguard of the Scientific Revolution;

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<sup>1</sup> See William McNeill's article, "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians", *AHR* vol. 91 (February, 1986) pp. 1-10 for an introductory investigation on the relationship of myth and history.

<sup>2</sup> The principle academic work investigating the Madoc myth is Gwyn A. Williams, *Madoc: The Making of a Myth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> The legend of Madoc was part of an oral tradition for which any contemporary written sources have been lost. The first written account in English was George Peckham, *A True Report of the late discoveries and possessions taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, Newfound Landes*, published in 1583.

the latter consigned him to the realm of a mystic or magus.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, Dee's connection with the Madoc myth arose from Dee's interests and efforts in overseas exploration, and through his antiquarian interest in his own Welsh heritage. It was with the combination of those two realms of thought that Dee began his propaganda campaign regarding the Madoc myth to support Elizabethan claims to the New World.

The Madoc myth was first put into print in 1583 by George Peckham in his work entitled *A True Reporte Of the late discoveries and possessions taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, of the Newfound Landes: etc.*, and later incorporated by David Powel in his work *Historie of Cambria* in 1584 and by Richard Hakluyt in *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* in 1589. The myth itself was obviously circulating at an even earlier point when one notices that Dee's unpublished manuscript "Brytannici Imperii Limites," which mentions the Madoc myth, was dated 1576.<sup>5</sup>

The Madoc myth was the tale of a twelfth century Welsh prince caught up and embroiled in interfamily rivalries over inheritance and titles. Madoc was a younger son, possibly illegitimate, of Owen Gwynedd, King of North Wales (1137-1169). Upon the death of the king there was neither an easy nor a peaceful transfer of power. The sons began to contest the inheritance of the title by the eldest son, Edward, who apparently had some facial blemish or defect that somehow disqualified him from the title. Edward apparently did nothing to assert his claim. Two of his younger brothers, David and Howell, contested the title, and unable to settle their claims peacefully resorted to war. In the conflict that followed Howell was slain, and David assumed the title of King of North Wales. That, however, was not the end of the story. At some subsequent, undisclosed time, another brother, Iowerth, made a bid for the throne and was thwarted by King David.

Thus, the state of affairs in the Kingdom of North Wales in the late twelfth century was turbulent and chaotic to say the least. It was against that backdrop that Madoc, rather than getting involved in interfamily political genocide, decided to relinquish any claims he might have to the Welsh crown and depart across uncharted seas in quest of greener pastures.

Madoc's first voyage—he would obviously have had to return to Wales at some point to tell of the expedition's success in reaching a new land—led to the supposed Welsh landing in Mobile Bay and the establishment of a colony in North America.<sup>6</sup> Madoc apparently was so pleased with

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<sup>4</sup> For the standard biographical treatment of Dee see: Charlotte Fell Smith, *John Dee: 1527-1608*, London, 1909; Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of an Elizabethan Magus*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972; Nicholas H. Clulee, *John Dee's Natural Philosophy: Between Science and Religion*, London: Routledge, 1988; and William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, Amherst, MA.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> The earliest surviving manuscript telling of the Madoc myth is Humphrey Lhoyd, "The historie of Cambria now called Wales," left unpublished at the time of Lhoyd's death in 1568. See also Dee, "Brytannici Imperii Limites," British Library Additional MS 59681.

<sup>6</sup> The connection to Mobile Bay as the site of the landing was made when an early Spanish map of the Gulf Of Mexico, dated 1519, labelled Mobile Bay as Tierra de los Gales—Land of the Welsh. See Williams, *Madoc*, p. 44. Some speculation on this curious fact has to be connected to the marriage of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon and the subsequent birth of the princess Mary in 1516. Henry's own Welsh roots coupled with a Spanish marriage surely must have been the reason a Spanish map would make reference to the Welsh. Not to belittle the power of

the newly discovered land that he immediately returned to Wales to solicit others—no doubt just as distraught with the state of affairs at home—to join him in his enterprise. Madoc must have done a good job selling his vision of a New World paradise to the Welsh because he would return to rejoin his former companions with no fewer than ten ships and several hundred persons. With the departure of that second expedition over the western horizon Madoc and his Welshmen faded into the western mist and into the stuff of legend. Nothing further was ever heard of Madoc and those who went with him.

The story of Madoc and his adventure would be told and retold by Welsh bards throughout the remainder of the Middle Ages through the Early Modern Period. Those tales would begin to take on a new dimension after Columbus's voyages and Spanish discovery and colonization of the Americas. In the mad scramble that followed all the major states of Europe would become involved in schemes of territorial gain and aggrandizement in the Americas. It was to that end, and for that reason, that the Empire builders of Tudor England began to look for possible vantage points upon which to base their claims. The myth of Madoc and his Welsh adventurers inspired the English in general and the Welsh in particular.<sup>7</sup> It was against that backdrop that John Dee began putting forth imperial claims in Elizabeth's name to a large segment of the North American continent.

English overtures toward New World territories became specifically connected to the Madoc myth at that juncture when realizes that the ruling Tudor dynasty had a Welsh affinity and that Dee himself was of Welsh decent with relatives living in Radnoshire.<sup>8</sup> Dee readily and eagerly embraced the Madoc myth adding it to his arsenal of propaganda that attempted to bolster English claims to North America.

In 1577 Dee published the first part of his projected four part *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the perfect Arte of Navigation*.<sup>9</sup> The work was a appeal to the English nation to see its greatest resource as its connection with the sea and to assert British claims to foreign lands. The *General and Rare Memorials* was Dee's attempt to trace Tudor lineage back to legendary Kings such as the Trojan hero Brutus, King Arthur, and the Welsh Prince Madoc, using those names as support for his self proclaimed British Empire that included a sizeable portion of the North American continent.<sup>10</sup>

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this myth – to this day there is a plaque at Fort Morgan on the East Coast of Mobile Bay commemorating the Welsh landing by Madoc in 1171!

<sup>7</sup> As British and colonial expansion in North America moved further westward the tale of Madoc went with them. Every new Indian tribe explorers came into contact with was seen as a possible link to Madoc. Indian dialects, to those explorers, often sounded strikingly similar to Welsh. And every light skinned blue eyed Indian was inevitably of Welsh descent. Notice also how no one single sight could be given for those Welsh Indians. At first they seem to be in the Southern Appalachians, then along the Mississippi River Valley, then the Missouri, finally most Madoc searchers rested satisfied that it was in the Northern reaches of the Missouri that the Welsh descendants of Madoc finally settled among the Mandan Indians of North Dakota.

<sup>8</sup> See, Cotton Charter XIII, art. 38; Cotton Charter XIV, art. 1; Harleian Ms. 5835, arts. 2 and 3; Royal MS. 7 C. XVI, art. 35; and Cotton MS. Augustus. I, I, i. Where Dee made refence to "The Lord Madoc, sonne of Owen Gwyndd Prynce of Northwales, led a colonie and inhabited in Terra Florida, or thereabowts..."

<sup>9</sup> John Dee, *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the perfect Arte of Navigation* (London, 1577).

<sup>10</sup> See British Library Cotton MS. Vitellius. C. VII, ff. 201 ff.

Dee's expansionist program involved not only his work with overseas exploration and discovery but also the recovery of lands and territories claimed by the British.<sup>11</sup> Thus, Dee used the tales of Madoc and his Welsh settlers to support his assertions that Elizabeth held dominion over a vast territory covering most of the Northern Hemisphere.

In Dee's unpublished manuscript, "Brytannici Imperii Limites," he began the process of putting forth his imperial claims to North America.<sup>12</sup> In an imaginative piece of antiquarian propaganda Dee traced and justified British rights to those "Sondrye foreyne Regions, discovered, inhabited, and partlie Conquered by the Subjects of this Brytish Monarchie."<sup>13</sup> Dee continued, stating that the extent of those holdings, with Her Majesty's "title Royall to all the coasts, and lands beginning at or about Terra Florida, and so alongst, or neere unto Atlantis goinge Northerly: and then to all the most northern Islands great and small."<sup>14</sup> The complete work was a compendium of British antiquarian, historical, legal, literary, and cartographic materials and arguments to substantiate those claims.<sup>15</sup> To that end Dee cited voyages, both real and thought to be real, of King Arthur, Saint Brendean, Malgo, "a Friar of Oxford," John and Sebastian Cabot, Stephen Borough, Martin Frobisher, and Madoc to support his thesis. The following quotation is the precise connection of Dee with the Madoc myth:

*The Lord Madoc, sonne of Owen Gwyndd prince of NorthWales, leaving his brothers in contention, and warre for their inheritance sought, by sea (westerlie from Irland), for some forein, and—Region to plant hymselfe in with sovereignty: wth Region when he had found, he returned to Wales againe and hym selfe wth Shipps, vituals, and men and women sufficient for the colony, wth spedely he leed into the peninsula; then named Farquara; but of late Florida or into some of the Provinces, and territories neere ther abouts: and in Apalchen, Mocosa, or Norombera: then of these 4 beinge notable portions of the ancient Atlantis, no longer—nowe named America.*<sup>16</sup>

As William Sherman has commented, "In Dee's 1576-1578 manuscripts Madoc became the linchpin of claims for North America."<sup>17</sup> Or as Gwyn Williams has observed, Dee "snatched what had been a marginal, perhaps underground, story and thrust it into the centre of Elizabethan enterprise."<sup>18</sup>

The first printed text to mention the Madoc story was George Peckham's account in *A True Reporte Of the late discoveries and possession taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, of*

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<sup>11</sup> See Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, p. 149.

<sup>12</sup> See, British Library Additional MS. 59681. William H. Sherman is the first Dee scholar to have taken notice of this work.

<sup>13</sup> Additional MS. 59681, p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Additional MS. 59681, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> See Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, p. 185.

<sup>16</sup> Additional MS. 59681, p.14.

<sup>17</sup> Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*, p. 188.

<sup>18</sup> Williams, *Madoc: The Making of a Myth*, p. 66.

*Newfound Landes*, published in 1583.<sup>19</sup> Peckham had been consulting with Dee in 1582, and no doubt it was his conversations with Dee that gave further clarification to his own arguments.<sup>20</sup>

The assumption can further be made that, in fact, Dee told Peckham of the Madoc legend, which Peckham then incorporated into his own work—printing for the first time in English the legend of Madoc as a claim for Elizabethan expansion westward.

Peckham had been working in conjunction with Humphrey Gilbert in laying claims to the North America. In the third chapter of *A True Reporte* he "doth shew the lawful tittle, which the Queen's most excellent Majestie hath unto those Countries, which through the ayde of Almighty God are meant to be inhabited."<sup>21</sup> As Peckham stated, his aim was to provide the material that would "restore her to her Highnesse' ancient right and interest in those Countries, into which a noble and worthy personage, lyneally descended from the blood royal, borne in Wales, namely Madock ap Owen Gweneth" had first inhabited, and thus, provided the base on which Elizabeth's claims rested.<sup>22</sup>

Dee's assertion of the Madoc legend had been taken up as the principle material to justify those claims. A Welshman of royal lineage, who had sailed the stormy seas of the North Atlantic three hundred years prior to Columbus, clearly gave the English a legal claim to the New World! It was a beautiful and ingenious use of antiquarianism that helped in formulating the legal claim that British Empire builders were then beginning to use in their quest for territorial aggrandizement.

John Dee, Adrian Gilbert, and John Davies would soon be involved in wild speculation, gaining letters of patent to a large section of North America, as they tried to put into physical and legal reality the claims that to that point had merely been academic and speculative.<sup>23</sup> It was the sad thing for their designs would be that Elizabeth never totally bought into their propaganda.

As far as Elizabethan designs of Empire were concerned, nothing ever came out of the myth of Madoc. Further, nothing ever came out of the specific claims that Dee advanced. There was little exploration and even less in the way of settlement. The failed colony at Roanoke in present-day Virginia would be the only legacy of Elizabethan colonization.

The fact was that Elizabeth had little interest in the New World and never wholeheartedly backed exploration. What support there was for the ventures had come almost exclusively from private sources. Not until the seventeenth century and a new dynasty—the Stuart's—was on the throne would government support be given to overseas ventures. And by that point the myth of Madoc was no longer being utilized as an argument for colonization or expansion. Dee's hopes of

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<sup>19</sup> Sir George Peckham, *A True Reporte Of the late discoveries and possession taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, of the Newfound Landes*, (London, 1583)

<sup>20</sup> John Dee, *The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee and the Catalogue of His Library of Manuscripts*. Edited by James O. Halliwell. Camden Society Publications, vol. 19. London, 1842. P. 16.

<sup>21</sup> Peckham, *A True Reporte*, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> Peckham, *A True Reporte*, p. 33.

<sup>23</sup> See *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic-Addenda, Elizabeth*, pp. 103-104; and *Calendar of State Papers: Domestic, Elizabeth*, p. 114.

Empire had been premature. Only during the eighteenth century, after English colonization had already taken root and after American independence, did the Madoc myth re-surface—in the 1790's. By that time the myth was employed by those involved with westward expansion of the new nation. Once again the Madoc claims were used, only the emphasis and focus had altered slightly to assert American suzerainty over the western regions of the continent against Spanish, French, Russian, and even British claims to those lands.

Madoc had gone through the transformation from Welsh to British to American in the course of the two hundred years since Dee. Stories began circulating of blond haired, blue eyed Indians speaking a language that sounded very much like Welsh. But as exploration advanced further and further westward so did those Welsh Indians—at first they seemed to be in the Appalachian Region of North Carolina, then Kentucky, or Missouri, finally the Mandan tribe of the upper Missouri region of North Dakota came to be associated with Madoc and the Welsh. In the end, however, Welsh Indians were never discovered. But that simple fact—that no tangible connection to Madoc or the Welsh was ever made—never stopped people from believing in the myth. For that is the charm of myths—they are continually reinventing themselves. Such was and is the case of Madoc and those mysterious Welsh Indians.

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## Nieuw

### The medieval evidence

Owain Gwynedd (c 1100-1170) was a king of the north Welsh kingdom of Gwynedd and there is a late medieval Welsh document, *Achau Brenhinoedd a Thywysogion Cymru*, found in a number of early modern manuscripts and perhaps composed in the fourteenth century, which lists a son Madoc. A number of later medieval poets are said mention this Madoc ap Owain; references to a Madoc in the work of Cynddelw (c 1155-1200) are sometimes assumed to be to this individual, but they are more likely to be to his patron Madog ap Maredudd (c 1100-1160), King of Powys, for whom he wrote an elegy (*Marunad Madawc fil Maredudd*).

The thirteenth-century Flemish poet Willem, whose Dutch version of the popular story Reynard the Fox (*Van den vos Reynaerde*) states *Willem, die Madoc maecte, Daer hi dicken omme waecte* ('Willem, who wrote *Madoc*, and spent many a sleepless night doing so'), has been credited with writing an epic about Madoc ap Owain, but the work is generally thought to be lost (although the medievalist Herman W J Vekeman published a translation in 1976 as *Willam Madock*, promising a critical edition of the original that has never appeared, it is now generally acknowledged as a hoax); it is pure speculation that the Madoc of Willem's title was Madoc ap Owain. Vekeman portrays him in the same way as heroes of Norse sagas were portrayed: he visits the King of France, finds a tropical paradise and visits a magnetic island, story elements which have more in common with the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani* (Voyage of Saint Brendan) than with history. A number of medieval Dutch writers refer to Willem's work or, at least, to a well known figure called Madoc. In the poem *Rijmbijbel*, Jacob van Maerlant (c 1235-after 1291) links Madoc,



Arthur and Reynard in the context of a dream (*Want dit is niet Madocs droom, Noch Reinaerts, noch Arthurs boertige verhalen*); *Die Borchgrave van Coetchi* also links Madoc with a dream, as does *Het esbattement van de appelboom*, written as late as 1612. The writer Edward den Dene places Madoc in a fabulous underground cave with trolls and numerous animals in *Waerachtige fabulen der dieren*, published in 1567.

More promising is a poem by Maredudd ap Rhys (c 1430-80), vicar of Rhiwabon (Ruabon), which includes the lines *Madog wych, mwyedig wedd, Iawn genau Owain Gwynedd, Ni fynnai dir, flenaid oedd, Na da mawr ond y moroedd* ('Brave Madoc, great of frame, True offspring of Owain Gwynedd, Had no land, it was his soul, Nor great goods but the seas'). This is the earliest certain reference to Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd outside the genealogy and it seems to indicate that he was famed as a sailor, although as the poem was written as a thank you to Ifan ap Tudur of Berian for the gift of a fishing net, it suggests that this fame was more to do with fishing than with exploration. This is borne out by the succeeding lines, which say 'I am Madoc to my age, and to his passion for the seas have I been accustomed' (I have been unable to find the Welsh version of these lines). Claims have been made that the poet Gutyn Owain (c 1430-1498) refers to Madoc's voyages, but there are no extant poems of his mentioning him, nor do those who cite his authority actually quote his words.

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## **The development of claims in the sixteenth century**

The earliest writer unambiguously to mention Madoc as an explorer was the antiquary Humphrey Llwyd (1527-68), who wrote the first history of Wales in English, *Cronica Walliae*, detailing the lives and deeds of Welsh kings from the seventh-century Cadwaladr to the death of Llywelyn yr Ail in 1282. It is basically a translation of the Welsh *Brut y Tywysogion*, Chronicle of the Princes (although the story of Madoc is not found in the *Brut*), with continuations. His work remained unpublished until 2002 but the manuscript was used by Sir George Peckham (c 1530-1608) in *A True Reporte of the late discoveries and possessions taken in the right of the Crowne of Englande, of the Newfound Landes; etc.*, published in 1583. Peckham was a promoter of overseas colonisation as a means of solving the "problem" of the remaining Catholics in England. The story found in his preface states:

...it is very evident that the planting there shall in time right amplie enlarge her Majesties Territories and Dominions (or I might rather say) restore to her Highnesse auncient right and interest in those Countries, into the which a noble and woorthy personage, lyneally descended from the blood royall, borne in Wales, named Madock ap Owen Gwyneth, departing from the coast of England, about the yeere of our Lord God 1170 arrived and there planted himselfe, and his Colonies, and afterward appeareth in an auncient Welch Chronicle, where he then gave to certaine Llandes, Beastes, and Fowles, sundrie Welch names, as the Lland of Pengwyn, which yet to this day beareth the same.

Peckham was influenced by the government inquiry in 1582 into the case of David Ingram, who had been put ashore by the privateer Sir John Hawkins (1532-1595) Sir John Hawkins (1532-1595) near Tampico in Mexico in 1568 after Hawkins's third voyage ended in disaster. He claimed to have walked for three thousand miles with Richard Browne and Richard Twide, the only survivors of a group of two dozen men, through North America until being rescued by a French ship. According to Ingram's *Relation*, he passed through a region of many cities (he names them as *Gunda, a Towne a flight shoote in length... Ochala, a great Towne a mile long... Balma, a rich Citie, a mile and a halfe long... Bega, a Countrey, and Towne of that name, three quarters of a mile long... Saguanah, a Towne almost a mile in length... Bariniah, a Citie a mile and a quarter long... Guinda, a small Towne and a River, both of that name... five or eight miles one from the other*), with "very many Kings, commonly within a hundreth or a hundreth and twenty miles one from an other, who are at continual warres together", details which, until recently, seemed fantastical. However, we now know that before the population was ravaged by diseases introduced by the Europeans, there was an urban civilisation in the southern United States of America. Other elements do seem more exaggerated: Ingram reported seeing elephants, red sheep, penguins and golden pillars on his walk, none of which are known to have existed in sixteenth-century North America. However, the word penguin was seized upon as a Welsh word (*pen gwyn*, 'white head' - unfortunately, penguins have black heads and are not found in North America); Ingram claimed that he had heard other Welsh words during his travels. After eleven months, Ingram, Twide and Browne met a group of French traders in coastal Nova Scotia and were able to get passage back to England by helping them with their negotiations. Some years after their return to England, Sir Francis Walsingham (1532-1590), Queen Elizabeth I's Secretary of State, summoned Ingram to give an account of his travels; by this time Browne and Twide had died. To many, the account was incredible and although some of the details certainly are, the urban civilisation described by Ingram is now a well known feature of the region. Peckham included Ingram's story into his book, using it as confirmation of Llyd's story of Madoc ap Owain.

Llwyd's manuscript history was also used by David Powel (1549-1598) for his *The History of Cambria, now called Wales*, published in 1584. Another version of the story was published by Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616) in *The Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation* in 1589. This is the version of the Madoc legend that was to become the standard version used by those who claimed that the Welsh had discovered North America in the late twelfth century.

## The story

As given by Richard Hakluyt, the story runs:

After the death of Owen Guyneth, his sonnes fell at debate who should inherit after him: for the eldest sonne borne in matrimony, Edward or Iorweth Drwydion, was counted vnmeet to gouerne, because of the maime upon his face: and Howell that tooke vpon him all the rule was a base sonne, begotten upon an Irish woman. Therefore Dauid gathered all the power he could, and came against Howel, and fighting with him, slew him; and afterwards inioyed quietly the whole land of Northwales, vntil his brother Iorwerths

sonne came to age. Madoc another of Owen Guyneth his sonnes left the land in contention betwixt his brethren, and prepared certaine ships, with men and munition, and sought adventures by Seas, sailing West, and leauing the coast of Ireland so farre North, that he came vnto a land vnknown, where he saw many strange things.

This land must needs be some part of that Countrey of which the Spanyards affirme themselues to be the first finders since Hannos time. Whereupon it is manifest that that countrey was by Britaines discouered, long before Columbus led any Spanyards thither. Of the voyage and returne of this Madoc there be many fables feined, as the common people doe vse in distance of place and length of time rather to augment then to diminish: but sure it is there he was. And after he had returned home, and declared the pleasant and fruitfull countreys that he had seen without inhabitants, and vpon the contrary part, for what barren and wild ground his brethren and nephews did murther one another, he prepared a number of ships, and got with him such men and women as were desirous to liue in quietness: and taking leaue of his friends, tooke his journey thitherward againe.

Therefore it is to be supposed that he and his people inhabited part of those countreys: for it appeareth by Francis Lopez de Gomara, that in Acuzamil and other places the people honored the crosse. Wherby it may be gathered that Christians had bene there before the comming of the Spanyards. But because this people were not many, they followed the maners of the land which they came vnto, and vsed the language they found there.

This Madoc arriuing in that Western countrey, vnto the which he came in the yere 1170, left most of his people there, and returning backe for more of his owne nation, acquaintance and friends to inhabit that faire and large countrey, went thither againe with ten sailes, as I find noted by Gutyn Owen. I am of opinion that the land whereunto he came was some part of the West Indies.

The outlines of the start of the Madoc legend are certainly rooted in genuine history. On the death of Owain Gwynedd in November 1170, war did indeed break out between four of his numerous sons, both legitimate and illegitimate, Dafydd, Maelgwn, Rhodri and Hywel. This is where the unverifiable part of the story begins. Disillusioned by the family discord, Madoc (and his brother Rhiryd, according to some versions) set sail with two ships, the Gorn Gwynant and the Pedr Sant, from Llandrillo (Rhôs-on-Sea) in search of adventure and in the hope of discovering new lands. They landed in a fertile country and a hundred of their men set up a colony. Madoc and the rest of his crew returned to Gwynedd in one of the ships to find more settlers before setting off again, this time in ten ships that mustered at Lundy in the Bristol Channel, never to return to Britain. This time, they sailed up the great rivers of the land they had discovered, encountering natives who were sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile.

People continue to assert circumstantial details as if they are facts, although verifiable sources are never cited. The following is from the website of Howard Kimberley, a Welsh business consultant:

On arrival in America, they sailed from Mobile Bay up the great river systems, settling initially in the Georgia/Tennessee/Kentucky area where they built stone forts. They warred with the local Indian tribe, the Cherokee. When they decided to return down river in some time after 1186, they built big boats but they were ambushed trying to negotiate

the falls on the Ohio River (where Louisville, Kentucky now stands). A fierce battle took place lasting several days. A truce was eventually called and, after an exchange of prisoners, it was agreed that MADOC and his followers would depart the area never to return.

They sailed down river to the Mississippi, which they sailed up until the junction with the Missouri, which they then followed upstream. They settled and integrated with a powerful tribe living on the banks of the Missouri called Mandans.

Howard Kimberley does not say where these details came from: they are certainly not from medieval Welsh or English documents. The question has to be asked: how can anyone in Britain know about the outcome of the second voyage if Madoc (or one of his colonists) never returned?

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### **The search for the ‘Welsh Indians’**

During the seventeenth century, various explorers claimed to have encountered Welsh-speaking native Americans. The first known account came from a Reverend Morgan Jones, a minister from near New York who had been appointed a naval chaplain in 1660. After being captured by a people known as the Doeg, part of the Tuscarora people, in what is now South Carolina in 1666, he cried out in Welsh “*Have I escaped so many dangers, and must I now be knocked on the head like a dog?*”. A ‘war-captain’ heard him and understood the language, as a result of which he spared Jones’s life. Jones then went on to preach Christianity to the Doeg in Welsh for three days a week over four months. Unfortunately, he did not report this event until he wrote a letter on 10 March 1686 to Thomas Lloyd, another minister in New York. By this time, Paul Marana, an Italian writer living in Paris, had already published his opinion that the Doeg were of Welsh origin in 1673 and it is possible that this influenced Jones’s recollection of the events of twenty years earlier; it was not published until 1740. A similar account, relating the story of a shipwrecked Welsh sailor from Brecon called Stedman, asserted that in the early 1660s, he was washed up and astonished the locals by speaking their language. They are said to have told him that their ancestors had come from *Gwynedd in Prydain Fawr* (‘Gwynedd in Great Britain’). This was not reported until 1777, in a letter from Charles Lloyd to a Reverend N Owen; the same letter includes the more complex story of Oliver Humphreys, a merchant from Surinam who learned the language of a people on a remote part of the Florida coast and later discovered it to be similar to Welsh. The most notable thing about these stories is that they were universally reported years after the purported events (and in one case more than a century after), when they could no longer be verified. In 1753, Robert Dinwiddie (1693-1770), Governor of Virginia, asked for a report into into Welsh Christians supposedly discovered west of the Mississippi in 1750. The report so convinced him that he put up £500 to finance an expedition to find them, but he returned to England in 1758 before the expedition could be mounted.

Around 1780, the search for “Welsh Indians” became fixed on the Mandan people of North Dakota. They were notably fair skinned by comparison with neighbouring peoples, which has led to them being dubbed “The White Indians”. Speaking a language of the Sioux family, their heartland was the basin of the River Missouri and its tributaries Knife River and Heart River. Unlike other plains Indians, the Mandan were agriculturalists, living in villages when first encountered by the Canadian trader Pierre Gaultier de Varennes (1685-1749) in 1737, which made them all the more unusual; they also used oval skin boats with wooden frames, similar to the traditional Welsh coracle. These features quickly brought them to the attention of European settlers, who conjectured that these might be the descendants of Madoc’s followers.

The publication of *An Enquiry into the Truth of the Tradition concerning the Discovery of America by Prince Madog ab Owen Gwynedd about the year 1170* by John Williams (1727-1798) reawakened interest in the story in Wales, undergoing a nationalist revival at that time. Samuel Jones (1735-1814), a Baptist minister at Pennepek (Philadelphia, USA), became involved in the search for the “Welsh Indians” after receiving a letter from William Richards, claiming that “...if such a nationalisty exists, and there seems now to be no great room to doubt the fact, it will then appear that a branch of the Welsh Nation has preserved its independence even to this day”: the search for the descendants of Madoc was becoming mixed up with developing Welsh nationalism. In 1792, the explorer John Thomas Evans (1770-1799) was sent to investigate their language, as it was supposed to contain recognisably Welsh words. He was imprisoned by the Spanish as a spy in 1794, but managed to persuade the authorities that he was searching for the “Welsh Indians”; it happened that they were financing a party under the Scottish fur trader James McKay, who was also seeking a newly discovered people who were supposed to be the fabled Welsh speaking Indians. This people, identified with the Mandans who had actually been discovered in 1737, had been rediscovered by a French trader, Jacques d’Église in 1791. Arriving among the Mandan on 24 September 1796, John Evans spent some months without finding any trace of Welsh cultural influence. As a result, he wrote back to Samuel Jones of Pennepek, who was one of his contacts in America, on 15 July 1797 that “*Thus having explored and charted the Missurie for 1,800 miles and by my Communications with the Indians this side of the Pacific Ocean from 35 to 49 degrees of Latitude, I am able to inform you that there is no such People as the Welsh Indians*”.

There the matter ought to have rested. With the westward expansion of the young United States of America, contact with the native peoples of the plains became more frequent (and, as often as not, hostile). The hoped-for “Welsh Indians” failed to materialise, as did the “Lost Tribes of Israel”, the descendants of Leif Erikson and other putative European settlers of the distant past. Madoc was relegated to the realm of romantic poetry and fiction until the artist George Catlin (1796-1872) spent some time with the Mandan in 1832 and convinced himself that the earlier reports of their Welsh linguistic affinities were correct, after all; he even suggested that the tribal name was “*a corruption or abbreviation, perhaps, of ‘Madagwys,’ the name applied by the Welsh to the followers of Madawc*”. He suggested that Mandan ceramics were similar to those found close to the Gulf of Mexico, confirming to him that they were descendants of Madoc who had migrated northwards from their landing point in Mobile Bay. Six years later, smallpox hit

the Mandan and with fewer than two hundred left, they amalgamated with their neighbours the Hidatsa and Arikara.



The memorial plaque  
marking Madoc's supposed  
landing place at Mobile Bay  
(Alabama, USA)

The death-knell for the story came at the Langollen *eisteddfod* of 1858, where a competition for the best essay on Madoc ap Owain resulted in a controversial entry by the chemist and amateur historian Thomas Stephens (1821-1875). One of the judges awarded Stephens the prize, another awarded it jointly with a pro-Madoc submission, while a third resigned; however, the main committee rejected the award to Stephens on the grounds that it was “*not on the given subject*” and when Stephens objected, they ordered the band to play. The audience demanded to hear Stephens, who attacked the committee for wishing to suppress the uncomfortable truth that Madoc was unattested in medieval chronicles and therefore did not exist. Since then, there has been little enthusiasm for reviving the stories of Madoc on this side of the Atlantic.

Things were rather different in the United States of America. Spared the fallout from Stephens's essay, the views of earlier generations were repeated into the twentieth century. In 1953, the Daughters of the American Revolution set up a commemorative plaque to Madoc near Fort Morgan on Mobile Bay (Alabama, USA). The plaque, pictured here, was later removed and is now understood to be in storage. Perhaps the story of Madoc no longer finds favour among the American public.

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## Recent claims

In a press release of 28 August 2002, the “*experts in ancient British history*”, Alan Wilson and Baram A Blackett, announced that they had discovered “*proof of Prince Madoc in America circa 560*”. The first thing to notice is that they have pushed the twelfth-century Madoc back into the sixth century. According to Wilson, conventional historians “*often give a false date of 1170 and this legend has replaced the facts. At the moment, there is a small group of wreckers trying to steal our research and to promote this misdating...*”. It is unclear why they dismiss the (admittedly flawed) work of more than four centuries of historians as that of “*a small group of wreckers*”, but it perhaps suits the new version of the myth they are trying to create.



The Bat Creek Stone

The Madoc they seek to identify as the European “discoverer” of America is one Madog ap Meurig, whom they make a brother of Athrwys ap Meurig ap Tewdrig, a sixth-century ruler of Morgannwg (Glamorgan). This Madoc is not attested in any of the medieval genealogies, though, and there do not seem to be any medieval stories about him. Nevertheless, this does not prevent the authors from recognising his name inscribed on the so-called Bat Creek Stone, an object excavated in 1889 from Mound 3 at Bat Creek in Loudon County (Tennessee, USA) by John W Emmert under the direction of Cyrus Thomas (1825-1910), an ethnologist working for the Smithsonian Institution. While Thomas initially believed the inscriptions to be in Cherokee, later scholars such as Cyrus Herzl Gordon (1908-2001) identified them as Hebrew, dating from around 100 CE.



### The Coelbren alphabet

Wilson and Blackett identify the script as Coelbren, which they describe as “*an ancient British alphabet known and recorded by historians and bards down the ages*”. According to their translation, the inscription reads ‘*Madoc the ruler he is*’ (they do not explain why they have not rendered it in more idomatic English and it has to be suspected that it is to give an air of antiquity and authenticity to the text). Coelbren consists of thirty-one symbols, with twenty-one basic letters and a further ten for mutated consonants.

According to the press release, public bodies in the UK have “*failed to engage with this vital research effort... they’re afraid that an independent group such as ours has made such progress. They prefer to ignore and neglect ancient British history rather than to deal with it. The Welsh people have suffered, and the opportunity to boost the economy, to bring thousands of jobs to Glamorgan and Gwent, where Madoc and his brother Arthur II ruled, has not been exploited*”. The accusation that the work is being ignored and, worse, causing suffering is a typical pseudoscientific ploy. In a similar way, Wilson and Blackett’s American colleague Jim Michael has complained that in “*Britain and America the academics have been slow to respond... There is a theory that there was no European settlement here before Columbus, despite the evidence, but this is for political and theoretical reasons*”. The acceptance of the Viking settlement at L’Anse aux Meadows (Newfoundland, Canada) is thus passed over in complete silence. One can only ponder what the “*political and theoretical reasons*” might be.

Wilson, Blackett and Michael have identified the main mound at Bat Creek as the tomb of Madoc. They tie in the date of ‘their’ Madoc of 562 CE with a radiocarbon determination, which is quoted as 32 CE - 769 CE (although not actually cited in the press release), from the mounds. Their talk of DNA analysis seems to have come to nothing; certainly, nothing has been reported, either in support or in refutation of their claims.

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## An assessment of the claim

First recorded almost four hundred years after the lifetime of Madoc ap Owain Gwynedd, there is little to indicate that the story was known before Humphrey Llwyd. While there certainly were medieval stories about a Madoc, who seems to have been more well known in Flanders than in Wales, it is by no means certain that the Madoc of the stories and poems was Madoc ap Owain. All that can be said of the medieval romances is that they concern a sea-farer of some renown. That is as far as the medieval sources go.

Where Humphrey Llwyd got the story is unknown. It is in none of the sources he translated into English and it is so far from the medieval versions that they cannot have been the sole inspiration. It is possible, perhaps even probable, that he simply made it up. As a proud Welshman at a time when the English government was doing its best to anglicise the recently-created province (following *An Acte for Lawes & Justice to be ministred in Wales in like fourme as it is in this Realme* of 1536), making a claim that the Welsh had discovered the New World long before the English (and, indeed, the Spanish) had ever set foot there would have been a strike by Llwyd in favour of national pride.

In 1991, archaeologists Robert C Mainfort Jr. and Mary L Kwas, writing in *The Tennessee Anthropologist* 16 (1) identified the hoaxer of the Bat Creek Stone as John Emmert, the assistant who claimed to have found it. Cyrus Thomas had doubts about Emmert's abilities, believing his judgement to be impaired by the drink problem that eventually led to his sacking. Following a series of begging letters to Thomas, Emmert was reinstated in 1888, promising to give him 'greater satisfaction than I ever did before' and agreeing with Thomas's hypothesis that the Cherokees were the moundbuilders. Emmert certainly had the motive for producing a spectacular find and despite Cyrus Gordon's identification of the script as Hebrew, it is passable for the Cherokee syllabary. Alas, the Cherokee syllabary was invented in 1819 by the native American silversmith Sequoyah (c 1767-1843, also known as George Gist/Guess/Guest) and a radiocarbon date on material from Mound 3 of  $1605 \pm 170$  bp ( $409 \pm 174$  CE) is much too early.

So, could Blackett and Wilson be right in identifying the inscription as sixth-century Welsh, in the Coelbren script? Once again, we find Coelbren to be a modern invention, having been first published in 1791 by Edward Williams (1747-1826, better known as Iolo Morganwg), a serial forger. Although claims have been made for an earlier origin (such as in the "Welsh runes" attributed to the scholar Nennius or Nemnivus and said to have been invented because an Englishman had taunted him that the Welsh had no writing system), nothing like Coelbren is attested before the time of Edward Williams. It is also evident that if it incorporates symbols for mutated consonants and such mutations are not written before the period of Middle Welsh orthography (twelfth to fourteenth centuries CE), long after the date claimed for the Bat Creek inscription by Wilson and Blackett, then Coelbren can be no earlier than the twelfth century CE.

Wilson and Blackett are keen promoters of an alternative Arthurian archaeology that uses some very poor evidence that does not stand up to critical scrutiny. Indeed, there is even a suggestion that some of the evidence they use is fraudulent. Their frequent complaint that they are not taken

seriously by academe is typical of Bad Archaeologists: they tell their readers that the reasons for being ignored are professional jealousies, an inability to see beyond accepted ideas and even darkly political conspiracies. Like so many other Bad Archaeologists they seem incapable of recognising that the real reason the professional archaeologists do not give them the recognition they believe they deserve is that their ideas are poorly thought out, supported by inadmissible evidence and, ultimately, rubbish.

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## Nieuw

### 44. No title [Mythopedia Website]

...droom, die we uit onze eigen traditie kennen. Willems vertrouwdheid met de gegevens uit Wales zou verklaard kunnen worden door hem op te laten treden als een dichter, geneesheer en geestelijke- zoals Lampo beoogt. Het schijnt dat Willem deel uitgemaakt heeft van de Goliarden, een gilde van jonge studenten in de theologie die bedelend in hun behoefte moesten voorzien. Een dergelijke achtergrond past uitstekend op de gegevens die we met betrekking tot Willem hebben. Bovendien doet ze recht aan een bewering van de 12 e- of 13 e-eeuwse hofkapelaan Walter Map dat Willem, een jongleur-bard, connecties met Engeland gehad zou hebben. Een probleem dat door Lampo uitgebreid aan de orde gesteld wordt is helaas de betrouwbaarheid van het bewuste citaat bij Map. Nochtans blijft er veel te zeggen voor Willems affiniteit met Britannïë. Alles bij elkaar is het goed denkbaar dat de bekende Cymrische prins Madoc de historische figuur achter de 'Madoc' van Willem geweest is. RELATIE TUSSEN WILLEM EN MADOC In 1976 publiceerde H. W. J. Vekeman zijn Willam Madock, een zelfgemaakte vertaling op grond van de originele ...

Terms matched: 1 - Score: 30 - 16 Mar 2007 - 16k - URL: <http://mythopedia.info/madoc.htm>

## Nieuw

### Fact About Wales and the Welsh

#### 1. Welshmen may have settled America before Columbus.

It is now well known that Viking explorers reached parts of the eastern seaboard of what is now Canada about the year 1100 and that Norwegian Leif Erikson's Vinland may have been an area that is now part of the United States. What is less known is that a Welshman may not have been too far behind Erikson, bringing settlers with him.

According to Welsh legend, Madog ab Owain Gwynedd was a 12th century prince from Gwynedd who sailed westward with a group of followers seeking lands far away from the constant warfare of his native

Wales. According to the story, his eight ships made landfall at what is now called Mobile Bay, Alabama in 1169. Owain's little flagship was the "Gwennan Gorn." Liking what he found, Madog then returned to Wales for additional settlers, who consequently left with the explorer in a small fleet of ships. Sailing westward from Lundy Island in 1171, the courageous little band was never heard from again, at least in Europe.

Welsh tradition has it that the adventurers settled in the Mississippi Valley, befriendng the natives, whom they showed how to build stone forts. Some of these mysterious forts and stone walls can still found in the area. Some sources describe the Welsh explorers as moving northward through Alabama and battling the Iroquois in Ohio, with a remnant moving westward where they were discovered at the time of the Revolutionary War as the light-skinned, bearded Mandan Indians of North Dakota. The Mandans were decimated by smallpox in 1838, but many scholars have supposedly found much of their language and customs, as similar to those of Wales. For example, they used a small round boat made of buffalo hides (the bull boat) stretched over a willow frame. This is almost identical to the Welsh coracle.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, Welsh interest in the New World was stirred by the writings of scholar John Dee (1527-1608), a London Welshman. A key figure in the expansion of Britain overseas, Dee publicized the traditions involving Prince Madog's supposed discovery of the New World. Elizabeth's court officials then diligently promoted attempts to find the Northwest Passage to India as justification for their war against the empire of Spain and proof of the legitimacy of their involvement in the Americas. Dee claimed that King Arthur had ruled over large territories in the Atlantic and that Madog's voyage had confirmed the Welsh title to this empire. The popular theory went that, as successor to the Welsh princes, including Madog, Queen Elizabeth was the rightful sovereign of the Atlantic Empire!

After the American Revolution, in which a lieutenant from Flintshire, North Wales, serving with the British Army in Ohio claimed to have conversed in Welsh with an Indian chief, fresh interest in the Madog legend was rekindled in Britain. It was helped along with the 1790 publication of an account by historian John Williams and further embellished by the indefatigable myth-maker and inventor of "ancient traditions" Iolo Morgannwg (Edward Jones) as anxious as ever to further the romances of the Celts. Another noted Welsh scholar, Sir William Jones gave a dramatic address to the London Welsh in 1792. He announced the discovery of America by Prince Madog and praised the so-called Welsh Indians, calling them "a free and distinct people, who had preserved their liberty, language and some traces of their religion to this very day."

Thus in 1792, Welsh explorer John Thomas Evans (from Waunfawr) was encouraged to search for these "Welsh Indians." After landing in Baltimore in 1792, he traveled on foot to St. Louis where the Spanish governor imprisoned him as a British spy. Evans was later released and worked for the Spanish Missouri Company in their efforts to open the way to the Pacific. Led first by the Scottish adventurer and trader James MacKay, Evans later branched out to wander on his journeys alone, traveling over 2,000 miles exploring the Missouri Valley. His maps of the hitherto unknown territories were a great help to the later expeditions of Lewis and Clark (Meriwether Lewis himself was of Welsh descent; his native guide Sacajawea had been raised in a Mandan village) which put so much of the American West on the map.

Evans did not find the missing tribe, which Welsh people called the Madogwys, after the prince. Though he lived with the Mandans for a whole winter, he was not able to find any Welsh influence among them. Yet, despite Evans's letter to the London Cymmrodorion Society in 1797 that denied the existence of the Welsh Mandans, the legend persisted in Britain, even finding its way into English literature. In Robert Southey's long poem *Madoc* (1805), the poet develops the theme that Madog may have been the white leader from the east who brought an American tribe south into Mexico.

Others dismissed the fanciful story. In 1858, a prize-winning essay was submitted to the Llangollen Eisteddfod by antiquary and literary critic Thomas Stephens who completely refuted the Madog myth. However, it remained far too good a legend, and far too engrained in their consciousness for Welshmen to dismiss it as mere fantasy (even the adjudicators at Llangollen withheld the award for fear of upsetting

the "believers"). In any case, argued the judges, Evans had been working for the Spanish government in its own claims to the Mississippi region and thus could not have been too eager or in a position to enhance British claims to the area.

American artist George Catlin claimed to have found the Welsh-speaking Mandans, even depicting some of them before their decimation by smallpox. Thus, despite the failure of Evans and others to find a Welsh-speaking Indian tribe in the American hinterland, a "Madog fever" developed that became a powerful incentive for emigration to the New World. One of its leading advocates was the Baptist minister Morgan John Rhys (who founded Welsh settlements in Beulah and Cambria, Pennsylvania in 1798). As far as the legend itself affected the people of Wales, whatever the facts behind it, it became and has steadfastly remained one of the most enduring sources of national pride.

A latter-day Evans was Welshman Tony Williams, who recently visited the few remaining Mandans on their reservation in North Dakota. Part of the Sioux Nation, the Mandans are reputed to be taller and fairer of skin than their brothers and some even had blue eyes. Williams's reported that some Mandan creation myths speak of the Lone Man and the last Mandan Scattercorn priest whom, in 1917, provided details of 33 generations of descendants. The Lone Man apparently came from across the sea bringing with him "multi-colored cattle" and introducing building and planting skills. Williams's findings are published in "The Forgotten People" (Gomer Press, 1996). They are bound to rekindle the old Madoc controversy. Perhaps the legend may indeed contain elements of truth about the arrival of the Welsh in the New World long before the voyages of Columbus.

Note: Madog and Madoc are variant spellings of the same name.

## **2. Canada was explored and mapped by a Welshman.**

Not only John Evans (and Meriwether Lewis) helped map the North American continent, but another Welshman, David Thompson could rightly be called "the man who measured Canada." Almost on his own, this prodigious explorer surveyed most of the Canadian-US border during the early days of the country. Covering 80,000 miles on foot, dog sled, horseback and canoe, 200 years ago, Thompson defined one-fifth of the North American continent. His 77 volumes detailing his studies in geography, biology and ethnography entitles him to the title of one of the world's greatest land geographers.

Though born in Wales, Thompson was educated at a charity school in London, immigrating to Canada to work for the Hudson Bay Company in 1784. At the time, the map of Canada was mostly blank. He was taught the art of surveying from a colleague and the skills of wilderness survival from native Canadians. In 1797 he joined the North Company at Montreal and began his explorations of the vast continent to the West.

In 1807, Thompson discovered the source of the Columbia River, becoming the first European to explore the river's entire course. He later helped the commission that set the border between Canada and the United States. He had already explored the territory of the Mandans and accurately fixed the location of the headwaters of the Mississippi, which had been a border point set by the 1794 Jay Treaty.

Thompson amazed his fellow explorers (including the more well known Scot, [Alexander] Mackenzie who has received most of the credit rightly due to Thompson) by remaining teetotal, by refusing to use alcohol as a trade item with the native people and for reading the Bible in French. In 1810, his discovery of the Athabasca Pass provided a navigable route to the West Coast. When Lewis and Clark were sent West to try to settle claims to the Oregon territory, they used one of Thompson's maps of the Mandan country for part of their journey. Not much of a socializer and preferring to hide from the spotlight, Thompson was known as an outsider, "that Welshman," staying aloof from the close clan of explorers and traders. At age 67 Thompson was busy finding an alternate canal route in southern Ontario to avoid the Great Lakes. He died in 1857 ten years before Canada received its independence. He deserves to be better remembered

as one of North American's founding fathers.

### **3. America may have taken its name from a Welshman.**

According to research conducted by an English College professor, America did not take its name from Amerigo Vespucci, but from a senior collector of Customs at Bristol, the main port from which English voyages of discovery sailed in the late 15th century. Dr. Basil Cottle, who is himself of Welsh birth, tells us that the official was Richard Amerik, one of the chief investors in the second transatlantic voyage of John Cabot, which led to the famous navigator receiving the King's Pension for his discoveries.

John Cabot landed in the New World in May 1497, becoming the first recorded European to set foot on American soil. As far as Amerik's Welsh connection is concerned, the word "Amerik" itself seems to be derived from ap Meuric, Welsh for the son of Maurice. (The later was anglicized further to Morris). There was a large Welsh population in Bristol in the late 15th century.

Because Cabot's voyages were made before the year 1500, they pre-date Amerigo Vespucci's interest in the New World. Professor Cottle reminds us that new countries or continents are never named after a person's first name, always after his or her second name. Thus, America would have become "Vespucci Land" if the Italian explorer really gave his name to the newly discovered continent (i.e. Tasmania, Van Dieman's Land, Cook Islands, etc.). It seems that countries or territories are named after first names only when the name is that of a royal personage such as Prince Edward Island, Victoria, etc.).

John Cabot, father of later more-famed explorer Sebastian Cabot, was the English name of the Italian navigator whose voyages in 1497 and 1498 laid the groundwork for the later British claim to Canada. He moved to London in 1484 and was authorized by King Henry VII to search for unknown lands to the West. On his little ship Matthew, Cabot reached Labrador and mapped the North American coastline from Nova Scotia to Newfoundland. As the chief customs official in Bristol, Richard Amerik could well have had his name attached to these maps; so the newly discovered continent, in England at least, became known as "Amerik's Land." We have to remember that Vespucci's voyages did not lead to the exploration or mapping of North America, maps of which were mainly British.

Vespucci had met and been inspired by Columbus. His voyages in 1499-1500 and 1501-1502 took him along the coast of South America where he discovered the Rio Plata. He discovered that the coast was that of a continent and not part of Asia (as John Cabot had thought). It was suggested in 1507 (the year Vespucci's discoveries were published) that the new lands be called America, but the name was only applied to South America, and it could very well have been taken from that already given the more northerly regions explored and mapped by Cabot. The voyage of the "Matthew" was recreated in 1997 when it sailed from Bristol to New England.

### **4. Pennsylvania is not named after William Penn.**

Most Americans are taught that Pennsylvania, one of the earliest American states to be settled by Europeans, was named after the Quaker William Penn or his father, Admiral Penn. It is not so. Had William Penn, the Quaker leader, not ignored the advice of his secretary, the new colony would have been called New Wales.

In the late 17th century, many Welsh emigrants braved the horrors of Atlantic passage to flee religious persecution. The Welsh Quakers, in particular, sought lands where they could practice their own form of religion and live under their own laws in a kind of Welsh Barony. One of their leaders, surgeon and lawmaker Dr. Griffith Owen, who came to the colonies in 1684, induced William Penn to set apart some of his land grant for the settlement. The project envisioned as a kind of "Holy Experiment," involved an oral understanding with William Penn and the Society of Friends (a pact made in England before the Welsh sailed to the New World). The oral understanding set aside 40,000 acres of land (some sources give

30,000) in what is now southeastern Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, this agreement was never put into writing and later became a source of bitter controversy between Penn and the Welsh Quakers.

Even before Penn's arrival to take up lands granted to him by the Duke of York in payment of a debt to his father, Welsh settlements had begun to spread out on the west side of the Schuylkill River around the nucleus of the new city of Philadelphia. However, in 1690, in this so-called "Welsh Tract," the Colonial government abolished the civil authority of the Welsh Quaker meetings in order to set up a regular township government. William Penn himself refused the legality of the Welsh Quakers' appeal for self-government.

To the bitter disappointment of many of the early Welsh settlers, even the name of the colony was changed. In a letter written one day after the granting of the Charter, Penn wrote to his friend Robert Turner, giving particulars of the naming of the new province:

This day, my country was confirmed to me under the great seal of England, with privileges, by the name of Pennsylvania, a name the King would give it in honor of my father. I chose New Wales, being as this, a pretty, hilly country, but Penn being Welsh for head as in Penmanmoire (sic), in Wales, and Penrith, in Cumberland, and Penn, in Buckinghamshire . . . called this Pennsylvania, which is the high or head woodlands; for I proposed, when the secretary, a Welshman, refused to have it called New Wales, Sylvania and they added Penn to it, and though I opposed it and went to the King to have it struck out and altered he said it was past . . . nor could twenty guineas move the under-secretary to vary the name

Thus Pennsylvania was named after a Welsh word for head and not, as the usual history books have it, after William Penn himself or after his father, Admiral Penn. (The cunning Penn must have known that the Welsh word for "head" is "pen" with a single "n" thus we have to admire his duplicity.)

At first, the Welsh language was a major tongue in the streets of Philadelphia, many of whose streets were laid out by Thomas Wynne of Caerwys, North Wales, personal physician to William Penn (his house Wynnewood remains standing, the first stone-built house in the state). Large tracts of land to the north and west of the city were given Welsh names. For instance Uwchlyn, Bala Cynwyd, Bryn Mawr, Llanerch, Merion, St. David's, North Wales, Gwynedd, Tredyffryn, and so on, all of which remain today, and many of which remain unpronounceable to native Pennsylvanians.

In 1698, William John and Thomas ap Evan bought a tract of 7,820 acres in the area, settling it in smaller parcels to other arrivals from Wales and calling it Gwynedd (the white or peaceable kingdom). Many followers soon arrived, the Baptists being numerous established Pennepack Church in 1688, the mother church of their faith in the middle colonies. In 1711, they founded Great Valley Church, Tredyffryn, "town in the valley". At the same time, Welsh Anglicans were becoming prominent in Philadelphia.

The still very-active Welsh Society of Philadelphia was begun in 1729, and is the oldest ethnic society of its kind in the United States. Since its founding, it has provided us with many men of distinction who made their influence felt in politics, agriculture, the administration of justice, as well as in industry, particularly mining and the manufacture of iron and steel.

William Penn himself was not Welsh (though his ancestors may have been from Wales before settling in Ireland). On a plaque mounted on the east facade of the imposing Philadelphia City Hall, the following inscription is found:

Perpetuating the Welsh heritage, and commemorating the vision and virtue of the following Welsh patriots in the founding of the City, Commonwealth, and Nation: William Penn, 1644-1718, proclaimed freedom of religion and planned New Wales later named Pennsylvania. Thomas Jefferson, 1743-1826, third President of the United States, composed the Declaration of Independence. Robert Morris, 1734-1806, foremost financier of the American Revolution and

signer of the Declaration of Independence. Governor Morris, 1752-1816, wrote the final draft of the Constitution of the United States. John Marshall, 1755-1835, Chief Justice of the United States and father of American constitutional law.

According to the Welsh Society of Philadelphia, 16 signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Welsh descent. The list includes: George Clymer, Stephen Hopkins, Robert Morris, William Floyd, Francis Hopkinson, John Morton, Britton Gwinnett, Thomas Jefferson, John Penn, George Read, John Hewes, Francis Lewis, James Smith, Williams Hooper, Lewis Morris, and William Williams. In addition to Jefferson (whose autobiography tells that his family immigrated from a place "at the foot of Snowdon" in North Wales), there were many more leading citizens of Welsh descent who played instrumental parts in the subsequent history of the nation. They include Presidents James Monroe, Abraham Lincoln, Calvin Coolidge, and Richard Nixon as well as Vice President Hubert Humphrey.

We should also mention General Morgan Lewis, quarter-master general of the US Army and governor and chief justice of New York State; Oliver Evans, inventor and early industrialist; Thomas Cadwallader, co-founder of the Philadelphia Library; Joshua Humphries, builder of the US Naval Shipyard in Philadelphia; John Morgan, Physician-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Army and founder of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School; Robert Wharton, Mayor of Philadelphia for 15 terms beginning in the late 1700's; Frank Lloyd Wright (one of his masterpieces was named after the medieval Welsh bard Taliesin); and a host of others including the founders of Harvard, Yale and Brown Universities.

Others of Welsh descent have made valuable contributions to the field of American and world entertainment and the arts. They include: Bob Hope, Myrna Loy, Anthony Hopkins, Richard Burton, Ray Milland, Tom Jones, Jess Thomas, Frederick March, Shirley Bassey, Glynis Johns, Jonathan Pryce, Sir Geraint Evans, Bryn Terfel, Harry Secombe, Margaret Price, Denis O'Neil, Gwyneth Jones and many, many other distinguished actor, singers and musicians.

As far as the idea of a New Wales is concerned, though the Welsh settlers were numerous enough to be of great influence in the subsequent development of the colony, the refusal of William Penn to grant them self-government was ultimately of little consequence as their lands were soon swallowed up in the great wave of immigration from other European countries, particularly Germany. For example, though Welsh names predominate in what is now called "Main Line," there is no discernible Welsh presence today; and though the names Cymru, Caernarvon and others are still found in adjoining Berks County, it is German names that predominate.

Over the state line, in Delaware, Welsh farmers and iron workers came late in the 17th century to an area they named Pencader, meaning Head seat (thought by many of today's Delawareans to be a native American name!). In 1701, to counter the claims of Maryland to the area, Penn granted 30,000 acres to three Welsh immigrants, David Evans, William Davies and William Willis. They settled in an area to be known as Pencader Hundred and with those who followed them, established two notable American congregations.

At Welsh Tract Church, Newark, rebuilt in 1740, there are still Welsh inscriptions on some gravestones though time and weather are taking their merciless toll on the carved wording. One grave contains the remains of a former soldier in Oliver Cromwells' army who immigrated to the colony at the age of 82. Another of the Church's early members was Oliver Evans, the great inventor and industrialist whose mills along the Brandywine heralded the start of the rise of the United States as an industrial power. (He is also included in this List of Facts as one who invented the automobile.) Local legend has it that the mother of Jefferson Davies is also buried in the churchyard, but the story is baseless.

The other Church, Pencader Welsh Presbyterian, became the chief center of Presbyterianism in North America for a number of years and home to an academy. Both churches saw duty in the War of Independence, Pencader as an army hospital used by British and Hessian troops and Welsh Tract as a defensive position by American soldiers. Nearby Cooch's Bridge, where Washington attempted to stop

the British march on Philadelphia, is reputed to be the place where the US Flag first appeared in battle; an errant canonball found its way into one of the walls of Welsh Tract Church. Pencader Church also nurtured Samuel Davies, missionary to Virginia, a founder of Princeton University and its second president.

But the Welsh, wherever they settled in the US (unlike the Irish and Scots, for example), were all too few to keep a separate identity (apart from a few areas such as Scranton, PA and Utica, NY). There was no great wave of immigration to the colonies from a country whose total population in the late 18th century hardly reached half a million. In 1770, in fact, Carmarthen's 4,000 inhabitants made it the largest town in Wales. Therefore, we have to consider the influence of those Welsh who did emigrate to the United States to be out of proportion to their small numbers.

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## Nieuw

The legend of Prince Madoc is America's oldest and most fascinating tradition. However, this legend has been sadly neglected since the days of General George Rogers Clark.

This book is specifically designed to offer the entire untold story to a new generation. It has been composed from accounts of irrefutable evidence pertaining to the existence of a pre-historic race of white people who lived in permanent settlements in America long before the days of Christopher Columbus. They are believed to have been survivors of a colony that was established by Prince Madoc of Wales in the 12th century.

This colony was referred to in *Walam Olum*, the chronological history of the Delaware Indians, and *The History of Clark County, Indiana*. We are told: "That the country north of the Falls of the Ohio and adjacent to the river was inhabited by a strange people many years before the first recorded visit of a white man, there can be no doubt.

The relics of a former race are scattered throughout this territory, and the many skeletons found buried along the river banks of the river below Jeffersonville are indisputable evidence that a strange people once flourished here."

Of all the legendary stories told of pre-Columbian visitors to the American continent, the Madoc tradition takes precedence. The Atlantis tradition, twelve thousand years old; the Phoenician tradition, dating from three quarters of a century before the Christian era; the Chinese tradition of the Buddhist priest in the fifth century; the Norse tradition of the tenth century; the Irish tradition of the twelfth century; and the Madoc tradition of Welshmen in America near the close of the twelfth century, all lay claim to being accounts of the first visit of white men to the North American continent.

The difference that significantly separates the traditions is their claims were that America was visited. The Madoc tradition says that a colony of Welshmen emigrated to America in 1170, found their way finally to the Falls of the Ohio, and remained for many years, being routed from



this area and almost exterminated in a great battle with "Red Indians."

We believe you'll find in this book additional and convincing proof that Prince Madoc founded the first recorded settlement in America and established in what is now Clark County, Indiana, the longest surviving colony (1170-1837) before widespread immigration centuries later brought other "white" men to this country.

Equally important, I hope you'll find the 'stories within a story' interesting; "The Legend of Brown Dove," "The Spy With a Moneyed Eye," and "Lost Treasures" are fascinating components of the Madoc legend; I think you'll enjoy them.

*In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language.*

*Authority is - Encyclopedia Americana copyright 1918 - Webster's Encyclopedia - Richard Hakluyt, 1552 to 1616, a Welsh Historian and Geographer - Ridpath's History of the World - ancient Roman coins found in forts in Tenn. These Forts resemble the forts of Wales of the 9th and 10th centuries and of the white Indians of the Tennessee and Missouri rivers.*

*State Historical Marker Erected by the Virginia Cavalier Chapter of the D.A.R.*

Nieuw

Of Madoc and Monitors:

## A Trip to Mobile Bay.

"Anno 1170, hee left his Country,  
and after a long saile and no lesse patience,  
blest, with some happy windes,  
they discried land in the Gulph of Mexico,  
not farre from Florida, a land affording health,  
aire, gold, good water and plenty of Nature's blessings,  
by which Prince Madoc was ouer-ioyed and had reason  
to account his happy estate superior to his brothers."

— Sir Thomas Herbert,

A Relation of Some Yeares Travaile, Begvnne Anno 1626 (1634)

**By Ron Fritze**  
**February 5, 2008**

**The Alabama Humanities Foundation** has a really neat program called Roads Scholars, which sends speakers out to various parts of the state to talk about humanities topics, often related to Alabama. The AHF and the community inviting the speaker split the costs of travel, lodging, and a modest stipend for the speaker. When I received the information about applying to be a Roads Scholar speaker, I decided to submit a proposal to be a speaker and was pleased when it was accepted. I had applied to speak about the myth of Prince Madoc and the Welsh colonization of America in 1170 along with the subsequent reports of Welsh Indians on the frontier.

The story of Prince Madoc has several variations. It starts in the year 1170. Prince Owen of Gwynned in Wales has died, leaving numerous legitimate and illegitimate sons by his various wives and mistresses. Several of these sons desire to succeed their father and a civil war breaks out. Madoc is one of the sons, most likely an illegitimate one. He does not aspire to become the Prince of Gwynned, but he does hope to live to a ripe old age.

### **Where Oh Where Did Prince Madoc Land?**

Deciding to leave Wales, Madoc and some companions take to the sea and sail west. Eventually they reach an unknown but large landmass, which, as we know, was the Americas. There are various suggestions as to where they landed, ranging from Newfoundland to the mouth of the Amazon River. The three most popular locations cited by speculators are around Vera Cruz in Mexico, the mouth of the Mississippi River, and Mobile Bay. Those who advocate a landing at Vera Cruz assert that Madoc was probably the inspiration for the Mexican myths of the white god Quetzalcoatl.

**Wherever it was that Madoc landed,** he liked what he saw.

Leaving some of his companions behind to start a settlement, Madoc returns to Wales to recruit more colonists for the newly discovered land. Returning to America with a second expedition, he lands either at the mouth of the Mississippi or at Mobile Bay. Initially, the Welsh colonists think the new land is uninhabited, but soon after moving inland, they find that other people are already living there — and the original inhabitants are not at all happy about the arrival of the Welsh settlers.

### **The Pressure to Move Is Relentless.**

According to the Mobile Bay version, the Welsh move north and settle in northern Alabama, northwestern Georgia, and southeastern Tennessee. Faced with hostile Native Americans, the Welsh build fortified settlements, the remnants of which are the Indian mounds we see today. Relentless pressure from the native tribes forces the Welsh to move again and again.

**Eventually, so the story goes, they settle** in the neighborhood of present-day Louisville, Kentucky. After living there in peace for a while, the Welsh colonists find themselves facing a

great confederacy of the Native American tribes, which rises up and attacks them. A great battle takes place on Sand Island in the Ohio River, and the Welsh are defeated with the loss of many warriors. The survivors retreat westward down the Ohio, but at the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi, they turn north and follow the great river to the mouth of the Missouri River. From there they proceed up the Missouri until they reach the vicinity of present day Bismarck. At long last the Welsh settle down to become the original peoples of the Mandan tribe.

In the other version of the tale, where Madoc and his people landed at the mouth of the Mississippi, they are depicted as making their way inland along a more westerly route, but eventually the two versions merge at Louisville and become identical.

### **Can Anyone Find the Welsh Indians?**

The Madoc myth implied that descendants of the Welsh still might be alive somewhere in North America. The idea that the Mandans were originally Welsh developed later. Sighting of Welsh Indians began in the sixteenth century and continued into the early nineteenth century. Well over a dozen tribes were identified as descendants of the Welsh. One of the instructions that President Thomas Jefferson gave to Meriwether Lewis and William Clark was to look for Welsh Indians. They did not find any. Still, many people continue to believe the story of Madoc. It is almost too good not to be true.

**There are several places in Alabama** associated with stories of the medieval Welsh, including De Soto Falls at Fort Payne and Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River. As a Roads Scholar, I have accepted invitations to speak at both Fort Payne and Florence, near Muscle Shoals. I would highly recommend visiting both places.

The Mound Museum in Florence is a fine little museum located right next to a rather large mound near the Tennessee River. In the past, the mound was an important ceremonial center. The museum itself possessed a wonderful display of arrowheads and projectile points, some of them from the Clovis culture.

### **Fort Payne: a Great Little Museum.**

Fort Payne is home to the Depot Museum. It is a great little museum located in the old railroad depot, but this is not just any depot — it is one of those really fine examples of Victorian railroad architecture from the late nineteenth century. A nice collection of materials related to the history of Fort Payne and the surrounding area are on display. If you go up into the mountains, you can visit the De Soto Falls, which are also quite beautiful, although in this time of drought in the Southeast, they are sadly depleted of water flow. It is said that De Soto visited them — and Madoc, too.

**Another important location for the Madoc myth in Alabama** is Fort Morgan, which guards the entrance to Mobile Bay. As I've mentioned, some proponents of the myth of medieval Welsh colonization assert that Prince Madoc and his people first landed at Mobile Bay near the present day location of Fort Morgan. One of the great advocates of the Madoc legend in

Alabama was a man named Hatchett Chandler (1882-1967). He was a native of Alabama, a sometime business man, and an amateur historian. Some time after the Second World War, Chandler talked the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution into erecting a plaque commemorating the landing of Prince Madoc in 1170. Although his historical ideas were frequently problematic, Chandler led the effort to secure the preservation of Fort Morgan, which is an important landmark in Alabama and the focal point of one of the Civil War's more dramatic battles.

### **In Time for the Oysters and Crabs.**

The people at the Gulf Shores Tourism Bureau invited me in January to come down and speak at their Adult Activity Center. Once again, Twylia and I were on the road to Gulf Shores. For those of you not familiar with Alabama, where we live in Athens is about as far away from Gulf Shores as you can get in this state. It is a 360-mile drive, but almost all of it is via interstate, so it is not a bad drive. My lecture was scheduled for 10 a.m. on Friday, 18 January 2008, but they wanted me there by about 9:15 to share early coffee and conversation. We drove down the day before, got our motel room (the place allows pets, so we may be going back down with one or more of the dogs), and got some great seafood at the Original Oyster House.

### **As a vacation town, Gulf Shores has lots of places**

to eat, most of them quite good. Prior to going to Gulf Shores, many people gave us recommendations about where to eat, but the only restaurant that was mentioned more than once was the Original Oyster House, which was mentioned five times. We decided to check it out — and thoroughly enjoyed our meal. I ordered fried oysters, sautéed shrimp scampi, and stuffed crabs — all very good, but the stuffed crabs were especially tasty.

The next morning we made it to the Adult Activity Center and met several folks who had come for the lecture. At ten, I began my talk, well aware from casual chats and snippets of overheard conversations that I would be speaking to an audience already more than a little familiar with Madoc and the Welsh. I was a little worried that my lecture might be old hat to many of those in attendance, but during the lecture, the auspicious body language and affirmative head nodding of the listeners allayed those worries. At the end, I got a number of good questions. Several people stopped and talked as the meeting was breaking up.

### **Let's Give 'em the Warm Fuzzies, Minimal Reading, and Easy Grading**

For those among my readers who are accustomed to teaching the 18 to 22-year-old traditional student, you can probably relate to my occasional feeling that I've either turned into a very boring lecturer, or have aged into an old fogey. These days, teaching undergraduates of the traditional age group, particularly freshman and sophomores, often degenerates into providing warm fuzzies, assigning minimal amounts of reading, and a maximizing of easy grading. It is a proven formula to high student evaluation numbers.

**Of course, there are some academic administrators who** regard the numbers generated by student evaluations as if they were written by the finger of God on Mount Sinai and handed down as gospel to separate good instructors from bad. This approach is a sign of an administrator who is lazy and who also avoids having their own teaching evaluated, if they teach at all. But I digress. Let me just say this: If you give an organized lecture on the right topic, with a good delivery, to an older, educated audience, you will soon discover that you are interesting, not boring, and smart, not dull — that you are actually someone the audience members want to talk with and learn more from. Be still my heart! Lecturing to an older, educated, and interested audience restoreth your soul as a teacher.

In case you don't know it, ten miles north of Gulf Shores is the town of Foley, home to the Tanger Outlet Mall, a true outlet mall with many good bargains. That is where Twylia wanted to go. I dropped her off, headed back to Gulf Shores, and had a pleasant lunch with some of the people from my lecture who had invited me to join them. They knew of a good place called King Neptune, which features a weekly menu of inexpensive but good lunch specials. I chose Shepherd's Pie with sides of vegetables — it was a nicely done Shepherd's Pie, too. I thoroughly enjoyed an entertaining lunch, and when it was over, I got in the car and drove the twenty miles to Fort Morgan. I had visited the site once before, perhaps fifteen years in the past, but being this close again, I could not pass up visiting the place again.

### **I Had the Fort All to Myself.**

The day started out sunny, but after lunch the sky turned cloudy and the air grew cooler. I had a good jacket, so it was just fine for climbing around an old fort. To my delight I had the fort all to myself until the very end of my tour when two couples arrived. Fort Morgan is in substantially the same condition as it was in 1864 when the Battle of Mobile Bay raged near the end of the Civil War. Built in the 1830s, the fort was upgraded during World War I and prior to World War II to provide platforms for more modern cannons. It is a typical star-shaped structure surrounded by glacis to protect it from enemy cannon fire.

**Fort Morgan protected the shipping channel** at the entrance to Mobile Bay. In 1864, Mobile, Alabama, was one of the few ports of the Confederacy that had not fallen to the Union Navy. But Rear Admiral David Farragut was interested in changing that situation. He had long placed the capture of Mobile at the top of his list of goals. Mobile, however, was protected not only by Fort Morgan, but also by several lesser forts and batteries, the fearsome ironclad *Tennessee*, and some small gunboats. The channel was also obstructed by a triple row of floating mines placed to direct enemy ships into the guns of Fort Morgan and the *Tennessee*.

Admiral Farragut gathered a powerful fleet and a substantial force of troops to land and capture Mobile and its forts. Besides the wooden steam frigates, Farragut also had four monitors in his fleet. The monitors were heavily armored with large cannons mounted in rotating gun turrets. Some of the monitors had one turret, others had two.

## **Farragut Sails into Battle on the *Hartford*.**

On 9 August 1864, the Union Navy began its assault. The ships approached Fort Morgan in a double line with the monitors in the line closest to Fort Morgan. The line of the wooden frigates was on the outside with the *Brooklyn* in the lead, followed by Farragut's flagship the *Hartford*. When the Union vessels came into range, they began to exchange fire with Fort Morgan.

**Entering the channel, they began to approach** the *Tennessee* and its escorts. The lead monitor, *Tecumseh*, was ordered to engage the *Tennessee*, and its commander, Tunis Craven, was determined to do just that. Unfortunately he steered his ship across the mine field, where it struck a mine and quickly sank, drowning Craven and most of his crew in just a few minutes. The death of the *Tecumseh* caused the captain of the *Brooklyn* to lose his nerve. He stopped his ship, halting the frigates' line of battle under the guns of Fort Morgan. Farragut wanted the *Brooklyn* to keep moving, but seeing that it was not going to move, the Admiral ordered the *Hartford* to sail around the *Brooklyn* and across the deadly minefield with the other ships behind him to follow.

## **Did the Admiral Really Say It?**

Victory or defeat hung in the balance for the Union forces. It was at this point that Farragut supposedly barked out, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" No one in earshot of Farragut that day would later admit to having heard the Admiral utter those exact words — although, in good sailor fashion, Farragut during the heat of the battle surely damned one thing or another a goodly number of times.

**Farragut's gamble paid off.** He knew that mines frequently became water logged and would not explode. He took a calculated risk, crossing the minefield — and it turned out alright for him and his fleet. The *Hartford* and the rest of the fleet safely crossed the minefield, although they could hear the mines bumping on the hulls of their ships.

**The Union fleet then regrouped** while the *Tennessee* took refuge under the guns of Fort Morgan. Its commander, perhaps emboldened by the earlier sinking of the *Tecumseh*, decided he just had to engage the Union warships in battle. Out came the *Tennessee* to fight. The unwieldy Confederate vessel was quickly surrounded by Farragut's armada. Wooden ships rammed it three times without inflicting serious damage. But the monitors closed in, their big cannons blazing, and gave the *Tennessee* a severe pounding that knocked out many of its guns and destroyed its ability to steer.

The helpless *Tennessee* was forced to surrender, leaving the city of Mobile virtually without defenses. Farragut had triumphed.

**Afterward, when the Confederate minefield was cleared,** it turned out that ninety percent of the mines had become water logged. The *Tecumseh* had the bad luck the strike one of the few remaining live mines, but the rest of the fleet did not. Now when you visit Fort Morgan, there is a red buoy in the ship channel that marks where the *Tecumseh* went down.

## **How Wondrous the Eye of Imagination.**

Standing on the ramparts of the fort on a mild winter's day in 2008, a person with an imagination and an eye toward history can't avoid wondering what it must have been like to have been there on that violent summer day in 1864, either on a ship caught up in the smoke and splash of the naval battle, or high above in Fort Morgan with the cannons booming. Meanwhile, poor Prince Madoc's plaque is relegated to a storage shelf, no longer on display in the Fort Morgan museum. The park service staff are apparently a bit embarrassed by it, which is too bad. While the plaque commemorates a non-event of pseudohistory, it is also a fascinating artifact of local folklore.

Article by Ron Fritze

**Nieuw**

**Friday, January 25, 2008**

### **John Evans: In Search of the Welsh Indians**

***“Either the Madogion or death”– John Evans***

JOHN EVANS WAS A STRANGE YOUNG MAN who went on a bizarre journey to find a tribe of Welsh-speaking American Indians. It was a daring trip, and a foolish one. And it ultimately cost him his life.

Born in the village of Waunfawr near Caernarfon in 1770, the son of a Methodist preacher, Evans was a pious lad – pious and patriotic. At 21, he moved to London. And there he fell in with a group of radical Welshmen with some pretty odd ideas.

The Welsh crew were fascinated by the legend of Madoc, the prince who was said to have discovered America three hundred years before Columbus. The story goes that Madoc sailed west in 1170 after the death of his father, King Owain of Gwynedd. After finding new land, he returned to Wales and persuaded a boat-load of brave men and women to head back over the ocean with him to settle in the new world.

The intrepid pioneers were never heard of again. But their descendants still lived in the land that became known as America, and they still spoke Welsh. At least, according to the story they did.

As America opened up in the eighteenth century, the Prince Madoc legend gained fresh currency. Travellers and missionaries pushed into unmapped territories and returned with peculiar tales of Indians who spoke a language that sounded Welsh, or at least Welsh-ish. Some even carried back reports of a fair-skinned tribe – “white Indians” – who were believed to live out west.

Could there be something in the Madoc story after all? Did a Welshman really discover America? Patriotic young bucks like John Evans dearly wanted to believe it.

Things came to a climax in 1791 when an eccentric poet called Iolo Morganwg came down from one of his regular opium highs and announced he was off to America to settle the issue once and for all. The people of Madoc – the Madogions – were out there, he said. And he was the man to find them.

Impressed, Evans volunteered to go with him. Somewhat less impressively, the poet then changed his mind and backed out. But his young disciple was made of sterner stuff: he decided to go it alone.

Evans landed in Baltimore in October 1792 and was welcomed by the city's Welsh community. He found work. He began planning his adventure. And he was offered the same words of advice by everyone who heard his mad plan: don't go.

Even today you need to know what you're doing if you head off into the American wilderness. Bears, snakes, savage weather - it's not like going for a stroll on the South Downs. But back then Evans faced an additional, more frightening hazard: hostile Indians.

Native Americans and settlers had been at war over territory for decades. If you were white and valued your scalp, not to mention your life, it wasn't a great idea to go wandering off into Indian lands that you knew nothing about.

But Evans wouldn't listen. He was a man on a mission. "Either the Madogion or death," he wrote to Morganwg back in London.

In the spring of 1793 – just after St David's Day – friends in Baltimore shook their heads in disbelief as the boy from north Wales set out into the west alone. "God is my shield," he told them. He had \$1.75c in his pocket.

Evans crossed the Allegheny Mountains and arrived at a spot where Pittsburgh now stands. From there, he travelled 700 miles down the Ohio in a river boat – through Indian territory - till he reached the Mississippi. Then he followed that great waterway north to St Louis, where it meets the Missouri.

St Louis was a small frontier town at the time. Its people spoke French but it was controlled by the king of Spain who still had a large American empire and was hostile to Britain. When Evans bowled up, they thought he was an English spy and threw him in jail. Evans tried to explain that he was in fact on an innocent quest to find a lost tribe of Welsh Indians. For some reason, they didn't buy it.

The Welshman was eventually released when it dawned on his captors he would be more useful to them as a free man. At the time, Spain was trying to push west from St Louis and find a route



across the Rocky Mountains to its territories in California. If Evans was daft enough to want to go in that direction, why not let him, and maybe give him some backing?

Indians might kill him of course. But on the other hand, he might find that elusive passage through the Rockies and claim it for Spain.

So at a stroke, Evans went from being a prisoner of King Charles IV to an agent of the Spanish crown. An expedition up the Missouri was organised. Evans was made second in command under a Scot called James McKay. In the summer of 1795 the party set off – 30 well-armed men with four large boats loaded with goods for trading.

By November, they'd reached the Omaha Indians, whose chief Black Bird was one of the most powerful rulers in the region. You didn't mess with Black Bird. He'd once murdered sixty of his own warriors by putting poison in their soup (dog soup as it happens, with the Omaha a dog wasn't just for Christmas).

But the Europeans won him over with gifts of blankets, tobacco and muskets. And with winter starting to bite, they got permission to build a fort on the riverbank where they could hole up till spring.

John Evans wasn't going to hang around though. First he spent almost a month out on the frozen plains with an Omaha hunting party, tracking buffalo and sleeping out in subzero temperatures. Then in the new year it was time to get back to the main business of searching for Welsh Indians. He said goodbye to McKay at the fort, took a handful of men with him and rode off on horseback into the unknown.

Before they left, McKay gave the small party strict instructions to claim all lands they passed for the king of Spain and to make detailed notes of every new tribe, plant and animal they saw (including keeping special watch for a weird one-eyed beast said to live in the Rockies).

“Appear always on guard and never be fearful or timid,” McKay warned, “for the savages are not generally bold, but will act in a manner to make you afraid of them.”

Evans and his companions were made afraid all right. After about three hundred miles, they ran into a party of Sioux on the warpath. The Sioux were a terrifying lot, a people constantly at war with other tribes as well as whites. They attacked the Europeans, pursuing them for dozens of miles. Evans and his companions escaped. But the incident put the wind up them big style. They decided to head back to McKay to have a little rethink.

When the weather improved, the indefatigable Evans was off again. This time he traveled right up the Missouri into the Badlands of South Dakota, a barren place where wind and water has eroded the landscape into fantastic shapes: gorges, gullies and tall, thin spires of rock known as hoodoos.

After nine weeks he reached the Arikara tribe, a surprisingly friendly bunch who nevertheless cheerfully relieved him of most of his trade goods. Then it was time to move on again - time to find the mysterious Mandan people.

Evans had high hopes of the Mandan. A French explorer had already made contact with the tribe and reported that their skin was whiter than other Indians. He'd found them living in fixed settlements, not roaming the plains like their nomadic neighbours. They had huts, not wigwams. They raised crops instead of tracking buffalo. If there were "white Indians" out there, they must surely be these people.

Reaching the Mandan was a moment of triumph for Evans. He'd travelled 8,000 miles from his home in north Wales for this. He'd sailed an ocean, trekked across a continent, crossed Sioux territory and survived. Legend was about to be proved fact. John Evans was on the brink of becoming a hero.

So were the Mandan really white? Did they look Welsh? Erm, not really, no. Some seemed quite fair-skinned, Evans thought. A few even had blue eyes. But Native Americans' complexions vary as much as Europeans. Evans desperately wanted to see white people standing before him, but he couldn't. There was no getting away from it - the Mandan were, well, Indians.

And what about the language? Did they *speak* Welsh? Anything even resembling Welsh? *Na*, as they say in the land of Evans's fathers. No, they did not.

They were a jolly, hospitable crowd mind. Evans met their chiefs, Big White Man and Black Cat. He handed over flags and medals as gifts. Then he basically made himself at home, spending winter with them, huddling round their fires in the little earth huts they shared with their horses.

He stayed six months, learning about their culture and their land, occasionally entertaining his hosts on his flute. It must have been quite an experience for the lad. But there was no escaping the bitter disappointment: these people were about as Welsh as a haggis.

To add to Evans's worries, he was permanently hungry and the extreme cold was starting to get to him. That brutal winter with the Mandan broke his health. He never really recovered.

Evans wasn't even the first European to reach the Mandan that year. Just before he showed up, a Canadian fur trader called Rene Jessaume had arrived via a different route. Jessaume had established a small trading post, raised the Union Jack and then left.

Evans lowered the British flag and replaced it with the standard of his own paymaster, Spain (which the Mandan found highly entertaining). And when a few other Canadians showed up some weeks later, he boldly sent them packing.

But in the spring Jessaume himself returned with a group of tough frontiersmen weighed down with gear to trade. Evans tried to stop them doing deals with the Indians. But by now he was a

sick and isolated man and no match for Jessaume, a hard nut who had spent his whole life in the wilderness.

A furious row erupted. Evans said Jessaume tried to kill him; the Canadians said it was the Indians who turned on him. Either way, the Welshman was way out of his depth and he fled back down the Missouri, his dreams of finding the Madogion in shreds.

Back in St Louis, he wrote to friends with the bad news. "Thus having explored and charted the Missourie for 1,800 miles," he told one compatriot, "and by my Communications with the Indians this side of the Pacific Ocean... I am able to inform you that there is no such People as the Welsh Indians."

Evans's life fizzled out after that. Perhaps he should have gone home to Wales. But he chose to stick it out in America, where the defeats and disappointments kept on coming. He was promised a stretch of land but it never materialized; his health deteriorated rapidly; he was robbed; he lost almost everything in a flood.

John Evans hit the bottle hard. A broken man, he wound up in New Orleans, alcoholic and unemployed. And there he drank himself to death before his thirtieth birthday.

The Mandan, incidentally, fared little better than Evans. Contact with Europeans brought smallpox and thousands perished. By 1837, fewer than 150 remained. The survivors merged with neighbouring tribes, including the Arikara. The last full-blooded Mandan was believed to have died in 1975. Her name was Mattie Grinnell.

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Posted by Simon Bendle

**Nieuw**

# Welsh in America

*(This is taken from John D. Baldwin's Ancient America, originally published in 1871.)*

The story of the emigration to America of Prince Madoc, or Madog, is told in the old Welsh books as follows:

About the year 1168 or 1169 A.D., Owen Gwynedd, ruling prince of North Wales, died, and among his sons there was a contest for the succession, which, becoming angry and fierce, produced a civil war. His son Madoc, who had "command of the fleet," took no part in this strife.

Greatly disturbed by the public trouble, and not being able to make the combatants hear reason, he resolved to leave Wales and go across the ocean to the land at the west. Accordingly, in the year 1170 A.D., he left with a few ships, going south of Ireland, and steering westward. The purpose of this voyage was to explore the western land and select a place for settlement. He found a pleasant and fertile region, where his settlement was established. Leaving one hundred and twenty persons, he returned to Wales, prepared ten ships, prevailed on a large company, some of whom were Irish, to join him, and sailed again to America. Nothing more was ever heard in Wales of Prince Madog or his settlement.

All this is related in old Welsh annals preserved in the abbeys of Conway and Strat Flur. These annals were used by Humphrey Llwyd in his translation and continuation of Caradoc's History of Wales, the continuation extending from 1157 to 1270 A.D. This emigration of Prince Madog is mentioned in the preserved works of several Welsh bards who lived before the time of Columbus. It is mentioned by Hakluyt, who had his account of it from writings of the bard Guttun Owen. As the Norsemen had been in New England over one hundred and fifty years when Prince Madog went forth to select a place for his settlement, he knew very well there was a continent on the other side of the Atlantic, for he had knowledge of their voyages to America; and knowledge of them was also prevalent in Ireland. His emigration took place when Henry II. was king of England, but in that age the English knew little or nothing of Welsh affairs in such a way as to connect them with English history very closely.

It is supposed that Madog settled somewhere in the Carolinas, and that his colony, unsupported by new arrivals from Europe, and cut off from communicated with that side of the ocean, became weak, and, after being much reduced, was destroyed or absorbed by some powerful tribe of Indians. In our colony times, and later, there was no lack of reports that relics of Madog's Welshmen, and even their language, had been discovered among the Indians; but generally they were entitled to no credit. The only report of this kind having any show of claim to respectful consideration is that of Rev. Morgan Jones, made in 1686, in a letter giving an account of his adventures among the Tuscaroras. These Tuscarora Indians were lighter in color than the other tribes, and this peculiarity was so noticeable that they were frequently mentioned as "White Indians." Mr. Jones's account of his experiences among them was written in March, 1686, and published in the Gentleman's Magazine for the year 1740, as follows:

#### REV. MORGAN JONES'S STATEMENT.

These presents certify all persons whatever, that in the year 1660, being an inhabitant of Virginia, and chaplain to Major General Bennet, of Mansoman County, the said Major General Bennet and Sir William Berkeley sent two ships to Port Royal, now called South Carolina, which is sixty leagues southward of Cape Fair, and I was sent therewith to be their minister. Upon the 8th of April we set out from Virginia, and arrived at the harbor's mouth of Port Royal the 19th of the same month, where we waited for the rest of the fleet that was to sail from Barbados and Bermuda with one Mr. West, who was to be deputy governor of said place. As soon as the fleet came in, the smallest vessels that were with us sailed up the river to a place called the Oyster Point; there I continued about eight

months, all which time being almost starved for want of provisions: I and five more traveled through the wilderness till we came to the Tuscarora country.

There the Tuscarora Indians took us prisoners because we told them that we were bound to Roanock. That night they carried us to their town and shut us up close, to our no small dread. The next day they entered into a consultation about us, and, after it was over, their interpreter told us that we must prepare ourselves to die next morning, whereupon, being very much dejected, I spoke to this effect in the British [Welsh] tongue: 'Have I escaped so many dangers, and must I now be knocked on the head like a dog!' Then presently came an Indian to me, which afterward appeared to be a war captain belonging to the sachem of the Doegs (whose original, I find, must needs be from the Old Britons), and took me up by the middle, and told me in the British [Welsh] tongue I should not die, and thereupon went to the emperor of Tuscarora, and agreed for my ransom and the men that were with me.

They (the Doegs) then welcomed us to their town, and entertained us very civilly and cordially four months, during which time I had the opportunity of conversing with them familiarly in the British [Welsh] language, and did preach to them in the same language three times a week, and they would confer with me about any thing that was difficult therein, and at our departure they abundantly supplied us with whatever was necessary to our support and well doing. They are settled upon Pontigo River, not far from Cape Atros. This is a brief recital of my travels among the Doeg Indians. Morgan Jones, "the son of John Jones, of Basateg, near Newport, in the County of Monmouth. I am ready to conduct any Welshman or others to the country.

New York, March 10th, 1685-6.

Other accounts of his "travels" among the "Doegs" of the Tuscarora nation were published much earlier, but no other has been preserved. His veracity was never questioned. What shall be said of his statement? Were the remains of Prince Madog's company represented in these "Doeg" Tuscaroras? He is very explicit in regard to the matter of language, and it is not easy to see how he could be mistaken. They understood his Welsh, not without needing explanation of some things "difficult therein." He was able to converse with them and preach to them in Welsh; and yet, if he got an explanation of the existence of the Welsh language among these "Doegs," or sought to know any thing in regard to their traditional history, he omits entirely to say so. Without meaning to doubt his veracity, one feels skeptical, and desires a more intelligent and complete account of these "travels."

## **Nieuw**

### **Legend of Prince Madoc of Wales Gospel**

San Marcos, TX  
age: 73

A later development in the legend claimed the settlers were absorbed by groups of Native Americans, and their descendants remained somewhere on the American frontier for hundreds of years. The first to report an encounter with a Welsh-speaking Indian was the Reverend Morgan Jones, who was captured in 1669 by a tribe of Tuscaroras called the Doeg.

Madoc's proponents believe earthen fort mounds at Devil's Backbone along the Ohio River to be the work of Welsh colonists[1]The chief spared his life, however, when he heard Jones speak Welsh, a tongue he understood. Jones lived with the Doeg for several months preaching the Gospel in Welsh, and returned to the British Colonies where he recorded his adventure in 1686.

A number of later travelers claimed to have found the Welsh Indians, and one even claimed the tribe he visited venerated a copy of the Gospel written in Welsh. Stories of Cymric Indians became popular enough that even Lewis and Clark were ordered to look out for them, and folklore has long claimed that Louisville, Kentucky, was once home to a colony of Welsh-speaking Indians. 18th century Missouri River explorer John Evans of Waunfawr, Wales took up his journey in part to find the Welsh-descended "Padoucas" or "Madogwys" tribes.

There is a persistent tradition that the wall of Fort Mountain in Georgia owes its construction to a race of what the Cherokee termed "moon-eyed people", because they could see better at night than by day. These "moon-eyed people" were said to have fair skin, blonde hair and opalescent eyes. Although it has also been postulated that this wall was in fact built by Hernando de Soto to defend against the Creek Indians around 1540,[2] the "moon-eyed people", whose unusual description by Native American oral tradition would match that of a Caucasian, have still been linked to Prince Madoc and his fellow transplanted Welshmen.[3] Benjamin Smith Barton considered in his writings these "moon-eyed people" who "could not see in the day-time" to be an albino race.[4] John Haywood also gives mention to the legend in his *The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee* [5] although the later work was an effort to prove that the native tribes of Tennessee were, in fact, the descendants of ancient Hebrews.

The legend of the Welsh Indians was apparently not restricted to whites; in 1810, John Sevier, the first governor of Tennessee, wrote to his friend Major Amos Stoddard about a conversation he had had with the old Cherokee chief Oconostota concerning ancient fortifications built along the Alabama River. The Chief said the forts were built by the white people who had once lived in the area as protection against the ancestors of the Cherokee. They were called "Welsh" and their leader was "Modok". How much of the original conversation, which was supposed to have occurred in 1782, was accurately related in Sevier's letter in 1810 is debatable.

In the early tales, the white Indians' specific European language ranged from Irish to Portuguese, and the tribe's name varied from teller to teller (often, the name was unattested elsewhere), but later versions settled on Welsh and the Mandan people, who differed strikingly from their neighbors in culture, language, and appearance. The painter George Catlin suggested the Mandans as descendants of Madoc and his fellow voyagers in *North American Indians* (1841); he found the round Mandan Bull Boat similar to the Welsh coracle, and thought the advanced

architecture of Mandan villages must have been learned from Europeans (advanced North American societies such as the Mississippian and Hopewell cultures were not well known in Catlin's time). Supporters of this theory have drawn links between Madoc and the Mandan mythological figure Lone Man, who, according to one tale, provided his people with homes during and after a great deluge.

## THE WELCH NATIONS

*The great River is called by the Natives the Mult-no-mack [Multnomah] River; it is 500 Yards wide at its mouth; & continues that width, as high up, as where we ascended it. The Indian guide that was with us, told us that it heads Near the head Waters of the California, ... Our guide also mentioned that he had seen one of the Indians of the Clark-a-mus Nation, & that this Indian was white, & that he mentioned they had fire Arms among them. From the above information received from our guide,*

*I am of opinion, that if any Welch nation of Indians are in existence, it must be those Indians, & not the flatt head Nation, as before mentioned; this I believe, from their Colour, numbers of Town, & fire arms among them, which I flatter myself will be confirmed, whenever the River Mult-no-mack is fully explored. April 02, 1806 Joseph Whitehouse, Lewis and Clark Expedition*

*...our officers told them taht we would Speak to them tomorrow and tell th[em] who we were and what our business is and where we are going &C. these natives are well dressed, descent looking Indians. light complectioned. they are dressed in mo Sheep leather Deer & buffalow robes &C. they have the most curious language of any we have Seen before. they talk as though they lisped or have a bur on their tongue. we Suppose that they are the welch Indians if their is any Such from the language. they have leather lodtes to leive in some other Skins among them. they tell us that they or Some of them have Seen bearded men towards the ocean, but they cannot give us any accurate [account] of the ocean but we have 4 mountains to cross to go where they saw white men which was on a river as we suppose the Columbian River. April 02, 1806 Joseph Whitehouse, Lewis and Clark Expedition*

Date: 5/9/02 1:42:28 PM Pacific Daylight Time

This quote you shared reminds me of what was said of the Mandans. They spoke Welsh, fair complexions, etc....

The Mandans, and some of their neighbours, certainly lived in round, earth lodges not dissimilar to those found in Wales Catlin Notes

Ancient Mining on the Shores of Lake Superior: bet a buck-fifty that the miners were Celts or "Welch Nations". Could we presume even earlier migrations, when the mines played-out in Milesia? The Celts might have voyaged in exploration, going every which-way, but I think this might hint of timelines in the B.Cs.? Perhaps the Druids that raised or educated Madog ab Owain Gwynedd knew of the more ancient explorations, and sent him to the New World.

## ODE

*Madoc am I,*

*the son of Owain Gwynedd*

*with stature large and comely grace adorned*

*No land at home, nor store of wealth*

*My mind was whole to search the Sea.*

[The Welch Indians, or, A collection of papers respecting a people whose ancestors emigrated from Wales to America in the year 1170 with Prince Madoc (three hundred years before the first voyage of Columbus): and who are said now to inhabit a beautiful country on the west side of the Mississippi, Madog ab Owain Gwynedd, -- 1150-1180?; Indians of North America.; Indiens -- Amérique du Nord.; America -- Discovery and exploration -- Welsh.; Amérique -- Découverte et exploration galloises.

Similar to the Arthurian, legend claims that Madog was hidden by his mother and raised by Pendaran, an old druid. When Queen Brenda lay dying, she told Owain about his son. Madog was sixteen years old at the time.

From the Mabinogion, a series of old Welsh folk tales. Pendaran Dyfed (also spelled Dyved) was a powerful Druid. Dyfed was a place name rather than a last name, but for whatever reason, it is always Pendaran Dyfed, and not just Pendaran or Pendaran of Dyfed.

The Working Celtic Cross: In 1997 Crichton Miller made an astounding discovery that will change our concepts of the historical and religious past forever. Crichton's background and life experiences play a fundamentally important part in this revelation; he is a qualified yachtsman and navigator with an interest in ancient history and religions. Through the results of intensive research, Crichton proposes that our present system of beliefs and science was inherited from ancient mariners that sailed the oceans of the world in prehistory. He further proposes that the abrupt end of the last ice age, 12,500 years ago, was part of a cataclysm that destroyed of a large part of the flora and fauna of Earth. The most likely humans to survive this cataclysmic event were those who were at sea.

## KENT'S TREE

America's Stonehenge

Dolwyddelan Castle - Castell Dolwyddelan

## Nieuw



Few legends can have been as durable as that of Prince Madog ab Owain Gwynedd [(ō`wīn gwīn`ēth), d. 1170, prince of North Wales (1137–70). During the troubled reign of King Stephen of England, Owain and other Welsh princes were able to reoccupy much territory earlier wrested from them]

stone plaque in a garden in Rhos-on-Sea proclaims that “Prince Madoc sailed from here Aber Kerrik Gwynan 1170AD”, while a reciprocal one at Mobile, Alabama claims that’s where his epic journey ended.

It spawned rumours that have persisted down the centuries that Madog's doughty band of travellers interbred with the Native Americans and became the pale-skinned Mandan race. Now the Maesteg-based Madoc International Research Association is intent on proving the Welsh-Mandan link by using the latest DNA

It could involve exhuming the remains of Owain Gwynedd, purported to be Madog's father, from their resting place in **Bangor Cathedral** (an ancient place of Christian worship situated in Bangor, Gwynedd, north-west Wales. It is dedicated to its founder, Saint Deiniol. The present building of Bangor Cathedral is not particularly old, but the site has been in use since the 6th century) if permission were granted.

And Britain's most eminent forensic pathologist, Cardiff-born Professor **Bernard Knight**, (CBE, became a Home Office pathologist in 1965 and was appointed Professor of Forensic Pathology, University of Wales College of Medicine, in 1980. He has been writing since before 1963, when his first crime novel was published) has lent his weight to their research efforts by becoming the Association's president.

His fascination with the story of the first recorded Welsh emigration across the Atlantic led to him writing the novel *Madoc, Prince of America*.

”He is not just a figurehead, but a hands-on president who comes to about two out of every three meetings,” says Howard Kimberley, a Llandrindod Wells-based business advisor, who doubles as the Association's research coordinator.

Kimberley has few doubts in his mind that Madog did make it across the Atlantic some 300 years before Columbus, but spurns the idea often perpetuated that the Mandan people spoke a version of Welsh.

According to one story, in 1666 the Welsh missionary **Morgan Jones** was captured by an Indian tribe with European features. As they prepared to kill him, Jones prayed in Welsh for deliverance and was spared as the tribesmen realized they shared the same tongue.

Then there was the tale of Morris Griffith, who was taken prisoner by a tribe of so-called white Indians in 1764. He was supposedly also saved from death after he addressed them in Welsh, to be greeted in the same tongue by the Chief.

Legend has it that the Welsh contingent sailed up the river systems from Alabama, settling initially where Kentucky stands today, before traveling on via the Ohio and the Mississippi into the Missouri, where they met the Mandans.

Difficult though these stories may be to believe today, they inspired the London-based Gwyneddigion society to sponsor adventurer John Evans, who hailed from Waunfawr near Caernarfon, to set out to seek the fabled Welsh Indians in 1791.

He used the time he was there to map the Missouri for the first time, enabling the newly independent United States to claim North Dakota as its territory before the then-British colony of

Canada could.

"The Gwyneddigion's intention was to establish a Welsh settlement in North America, by uniting the two halves of the nation on either side of the Atlantic," says historian Dafydd Rhys, of Coleg Harlech-WEA, an expert on John Evans and his escapades.

"The situation was quite bad in Wales at the time and a detailed document drawn up by Iolo Morgannwg went as far as setting out guidelines as to how this settlement would be run.

"John Evans spent a winter with the Mandans in North Dakota, but reported back that there was no evidence linking them to Madog. He was denounced as a drunkard and as being a spy for Spain, but I'd argue that he was just being realistic about the geopolitics of the period."

As a native of Evans' home village, Gwynn Davies has also long taken an interest in his search for the Madogwys, as Madog's supposed North American successors are referred to in Welsh. He wrote a booklet about the great adventurer, actually the content of a lecture, and was among those instrumental in setting up a small museum dedicated to him in at the acclaimed Antur Waunfawr centre for adults with learning difficulties.

"There's no doubt that at one time there was a very strong belief in the existence of the Welsh Indians," he says. "It certainly was odd that the Mandans lived in circular houses similar to ones found in Wales, rather than tepees; that they used a boat very similar to a Welsh coracle; that they tended the land rather than hunted; and that there are a lot of words in their language similar to Welsh. John Evans was a remarkable man. He went through hell in his attempt to find the Welsh Indians and he was just 29 when he died. It is part of the Mandan people's tradition that a white man, known as the Lone Man, came from the east into their midst. Keith Bear, who is a Mandan, was over in Waunfawr some four years ago, and he believes in the Welsh connection.

"I really don't know what to think of it. There's no doubt that the Welsh were crossing backwards and forwards across the Atlantic at the time, as the Vikings had before them. It's possible, I suppose."

Antur Waunfawr's chief executive Menna Jones spent time with the Mandan people at their Fort Berthold reservation in North Dakota in 1999. She found a remnant nation struggling to hold on to its traditions, the tribe having been decimated by the smallpox epidemics of 1781/2 and 1837/8.

"There are only a few descendants left these days and just 13 who could speak the Mandan language when I was there," she says. "But they do get taught Mandan studies at school nowadays, where they study some traditions and learn some words of their language. It's very strange, in a way, in that they hate the white man for what he did to them yet see themselves very strongly as being Americans. As for the story of Madog, they've heard about the Welsh link, but they don't want to tie themselves to us. It's part of their tradition, but there is no CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE. There has been talk of doing DNA testing in order to try to settle the matter once and for all. But when I mentioned this to Keith Bear, he said that there was no way anybody was going to stick any needles in him. However, it's the legend that's important, not the reality. And you'd be surprised at how many American visitors turn up here at the museum because of it."

Howard Kimberley, though, is undeterred by all the hurdles his Association needs to negotiate. And he insists that the probability is that Madog did reach America before Columbus.

"I'm not saying that he was the first European to get there. St Brendan is reputed to have made it in the 6th century, while the Vikings definitely went there before Madog. But Gutyn Owen

mentions Madog going away in a poem that was written before Columbus' time. I'm no historian, but on the balance of the evidence available to us, I'd say that the link with the Mandans has an 80pc probability of being true. In addition, we're investigating the links with a people known as the White Madoc tribe in Pennsylvania and I've been in touch with one of them. I've also spoken with the professor from Oxford who managed to link the 9,000-year-old skeleton found at Cheddar to a man still living in the area through DNA testing. He said that the Welsh-Mandan link could be proven, if it exists, but that we would need to get pre-Columbian DNA from both sides. I don't know if they'd let us dig up Owain Gwynedd's remains. And, while we stick our ancestors in glass cases, the Indians worship theirs as gods. Lonewolf, one of the Mandans, had a touch of the horrors when I suggested DNA-testing one of his ancestors. They're still a very reverent

More than 800 years may have passed since the illegitimate son of Owain Gwynedd left these shores for the New World, but Madog's name still makes its impact all these centuries later. Indeed, Dafydd Rhys believes that it could be argued that the recent conflict in Iraq might not have occurred had it not been for Madog. "If it hadn't been for the tales about Madog, then the Gwyneddigion wouldn't have sent John Evans out to America. And it wasn't for his mapping of the Missouri, with the blessing of the American government, then Canada might have claimed North Dakota. That state gave its six electoral college votes to George Bush, who won by five votes. So you could argue that if it hadn't been for Madog, Bush wouldn't have won, and the conflict might have been avoided."

Gwynn Davies, who is investigating the legends that suggest Welsh blood courses through the veins of the Native American Mandan race. Mandan folklore tells of a white visitor, dubbed The Lone Man, who may well have been explorer John Evans, who was commissioned to establish the link between Wales and the Mandans in 1971. While in America, Evans mapped the Missouri River, which helped secure the state of North Dakota for the USA.

OWAIN Gwynedd ruled much of North Wales in the 12th century. He fathered 19 children, only six of whom were legitimate. Madog ab Owain Gwynedd is believed to have been born illegitimately in Dolwyddelan, near Betws y Coed, though probably not in the castle that stands there today. On the death of Owain Gwynedd in December 1169, war broke out between the brothers. Madog and his half-brother Rirydd decided to leave Wales and set sail westwards. In the first ever history of Wales in English, *Cronica Walliae*, published in 1527, author Humphrey Llwyd insists that "this land to which Madoc came to, most needs be some part of Nova Hispania, or Florida".

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## **Nieuw**

RHOS-ON-SEA, Wales, UK—The story of a Welsh prince beating Christopher Columbus to it by 300 years was the stuff of myths and legends.

Stories of Madoc's voyage to the New World in 1170 didn't make it into the school curriculum when I was growing up in North Wales in the 1960s, but that didn't matter. Madoc was our hometown son who had made history, or so the story went.

The Madoc story gained recognition in North America more than a decade earlier when in 1953, Washington D.C.- based Daughters of the American Revolution erected two plaques – one in Rhos-on-Sea, the other in Mobile, Ala. – commemorating Madoc's voyage.

The plaques read "In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer, who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language."

Historians delight in debunking the Madoc story, pointing out Penrhyn Bay, Rhos-on-Sea on the North Wales coast, where Madoc was supposed to have set sail, was far too shallow for a ship big enough to cross the Atlantic. Yet, during excavations for a garden for a Rhos-on-Sea home, remains of an ancient harbour were discovered.

In Wales – with a population of three million on the west side of Great Britain where 18 per cent of the population speak the Celtic language – Howard Kimberley has founded the Madoc International Research Association, hoping to find the truth.

Kimberley, 63, a former engineer who spent years researching the Madoc story, says many historians dismiss it as an Elizabethan invention, created to lay prior claim on the New World by saying that Madoc discovered America 300 years before Columbus.

But Kimberley says he has found copies of references to Madoc that pre-date the reign of Elizabeth I and Columbus' trips.

Kimberley, studying for a master's degree in Celtic History at the University of Wales in the hopes of uncovering more evidence, wants to raise funds to cover the cost of DNA tests to help prove the Madoc story.

The challenge is obtaining permission to test Native American bone samples that pre-date Columbus. Kimberley has found an ally in a Shawnee "wisdom-keeper" named Ken Lonewolf.

Lonewolf, 67, from the Pittsburgh area, believes he is descended from a tribe of Welsh Indians and is working on persuading U.S. authorities to release samples for DNA testing and carbon dating.

"Our last Shawnee leader was named Chief White Madoc; this name must have been passed down for many generations," says Lonewolf. "This was our chief who sold our village to white settlers in the late 1790s. This is not a figment of my imagination, but a matter of county court record dating to the late 1790's or early 1800's."

DNA tests have already determined that Lonewolf and Kimberley, whose female ancestors are Welsh, share the mitochondrial (female) DNA. "Now there's a coincidence," says Kimberley. "What we can't prove is when Lonewolf acquired a Welsh ancestor."

Dana Olson, 59, of Jeffersonville, Ind., has also investigated the story and wrote a popular book, *Prince Madoc and the White Indians*.

Olson's interest began when he was researching another book and discovered a stone fortification near Falls of the Ohio, Ind.

Olson went on to discover numerous other forts in Tennessee, Missouri and Alabama said to be similar to forts built in Wales.

"The physical evidence supports the recurring theory that the Welsh voyager penetrated far into the interior of America where he established a chain of fortifications and stoneworks that still exist today."

European and American explorers told stories of pale-skinned, Welsh-speaking Indians and Olson points to George Caitlin who lived with the Mandan Indians in Missouri in the early 1800s. Caitlin, considered the greatest Indian painter of the early American period, reported the Mandans, largely wiped out by a smallpox epidemic in 1837, spoke Welsh, says Olson.

Olson admits that there isn't unequivocal evidence of Madoc's existence. "But the evidence that we do have keeps expanding. I think it is so important to keep working on it because of the historical significance," says Olson.

David Klausner, professor of English and Medieval studies at the University of Toronto, calls the Madoc story "persistent" but favours the theory that the Elizabethans or the Tudor kings of England invented it for political gain.

But early Celtic narrative does mention legendary voyages to the Western Isles, says Klausner.

Klausner also points out that the stories of Norse voyagers discovering Vinland were thought to be myths until the discovery of L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland.

So I ask Klausner if it is possible that one day, undeniable evidence of Madoc's voyages will be found.

"There is always the possibility," says Klausner.

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*Meaford, Ont., writer Roberta Avery grew up in Wales.*

**Nieuw**



THE MEMORY OF PRINCE MADOC, Welsh explorer, who historians insist, landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 – 300 years before Columbus came to America – is preserved in the marker shown above and unveiled at Fort Morgan Tuesday. In the photo, left to right are Mrs. Mary Yale Williams, descendant of the Madoc family and member of the family that founded Yale University, Hatchett Chandler, Fort Morgan, at whose suggestion the marker was placed at the old fort and Miss Zella Armstrong of Chattanooga, author of a book in which she concluded that Madoc was the first white discoverer of what is now the United States.

#### Historian Insists Welshmen Erected Area Fort in 1170

By C. E. (Tip), Mathews

Register Staff Reporter

Ft. Morgan, Al. – A Tennessee historian found in the remains of an old Fort at nearby Bon Secour Tuesday new support of her contention that the first white man to set foot on what is now the United States landed on the banks of Mobile Bay.

Miss Zella Armstrong of Chattanooga, author of the book “Who Discovered America?” told a crowd gathered here for dedication of a marker to Prince Madoc, that there is no doubt in her mind that the Welshman was the “discoverer of what is now the United States.

The marker was dedicated by the Virginia Cavalier Chapter (Mobile), Daughters of the American Revolution, and is located directly in front of the Fort Morgan Inn.

Principal speaker for the occasion, Miss Armstrong, author, historian, newspaper woman, and archeologist, told her audience that after visiting the old Fort on Bon Secour River, she is convinced it was built by Madoc’s party and that it is the first fortress built by white men in the United States.

The mystery of who built the old fort, located in a bend of the river on land owned by George Brown and Jack Taylor of Bon Secour, has long been a puzzle to those who have delved into its stone foundation.

Miss Armstrong said materials and construction of the fort at Bon Secour are similar to those of fortresses built by the Welshmen in Tennessee and Georgia.

In her talk and in her book, Miss Armstrong presents three kinds of evidence that Madoc was the first white man to this land at a time about 300 years before Columbus arrived. These evidences are:

1. Credence given by many writers to reports men from Wales were sailing to distant lands to the west during the Twelfth Century.
2. Reports from individuals that they talked with Indians who spoke the Welsh language. (Legendary Story)
3. Fortifications found in Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia and the strongly expressed belief that European people were in the region before the arrival of Indians.

The story of Madoc comes in legendary fashion, but Miss Armstrong believes that the reason it was so handed down was that the English, who were at war with Wales at the time, destroyed the records of the prince's discovery.

The story was told about 1563 by a reputable Tudor geographer. It traces Madoc's band across the sea to an unknown land. Miss Armstrong contends his boats were brought to the Mobile Bay area by trade winds.

Miss Armstrong claims that Dog River, south of Mobile received its name from Madoc whose real name was Madog ap Owain Gwynedd.

Blue-eyed Indians found in the interior are also used by Miss Armstrong to bolster her contentions of the Madoc story.

#### Checked 2000 Books

Introduced to the dedication crowd by Hatchett Chandler, Fort Morgan historian. Miss Armstrong said how Gen. John Sevier, first Governor of Tennessee once talked with an Indian Chieftain – Teta Kuilia Kuilia who described white men as having lived in this area before the Indians. The chief said the white people first came to the Mobile area and that they called themselves Welshmen.

Miss Armstrong said her book concluding that Madoc was the discoverer was written after she had gleaned references from approximately 2000 books. Her work was published in 1950 by the Lookout Publishing Co., Chattanooga.

The marker bears this inscription: "In memory of Prince Madoc, a Welsh explorer who landed on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1170 and left behind, with the Indians, the Welsh language."

Authorities cited on the memorial are: Encyclopedia Americana, copyrighted 1918; Webster's Encyclopedia, Rev. Richard Hakluyt, 1552 to 1616, a Welsh historian and geographer; Redpath's History of the World; ancient Roman coins found in old forts and the presence of white Indians in Tennessee.

#### Mayor Is Speaker

The marker was unveiled by pretty young women when they removed a large American flag with which it was draped prior to the ceremony. In attendance were officials and members of the Virginia Cavalier Chapter, DAR.

In her talk, Miss Armstrong admitted that Lief Ericksen was the first to discover America but he landed in the far north of the United States. She insists that Madoc came about 100 years after Ericksen and that Columbus came 300 years later.

The dedicatory program opened with an address of welcome by Mayor Max Griffin of Foley. Mrs. Abbie Yale Williams of Omaha, descendant of the Madoc family, spoke briefly to the crowd. She was introduced by Rep. Frank W. Boykin of Mobile. Mrs. T. T. Tunstall, DAR regent was the presiding officer and Mrs. Myrtle R. McCormick of Fort Morgan introduced the mayor. Mrs. R. G. Cobb acting chaplain gave the invocation. Mrs. Henry Hamilton was program chairman. Honor of unveiling the marker went to four young girls of the area – Misses, Judy Ewing, Margaret Jones and June Purgley of Gasque and Betsey Walker of Fort Morgan. Mrs. W. C. Dorgan, general program chairman, was hostess at a luncheon at the Canal Café, following the dedication. At that time the Virginia Cavalier Chapter held its regular monthly meeting. Among DAR chapters represented at the unveiling were Zachariah Godbold Chapter, Ft. Mims Chapter, Needham Bryan Chapter, Ecor Rouge Chapter and Jones Valley Chapter.

### The Legend of Prince Madoc of Wales

The story of Madoc, a prince of Wales who, in the twelfth century, discovered America. This is not a story that most Americans have ever heard. We are told all about how Columbus discovered America in 1492, when in reality he never set foot in America. So the story of Prince Madoc (Madog) is never taught to our school children. If your one of those people who have never heard the story it goes like this. Prince Madoc, son of Owain Gwynedd, left Wales around 1169 due to the turmoil between his siblings after his father died. All fighting for their fathers possessions, lands, etc. It was not a nice place to live during this time. So in search of land where he, his brother, Rhird, and many others could live in peace they departed Wales. A few years later he returned with tales of a land uninhabited and rich for farming convincing hundreds of others to return with him to this New World. It is said he departed the 2nd time with approximately 10 ships filled with people and supplies returning back to this new found land. It is believed he landed in Mobile Bay due to what he had told during his return visit and fortifications found in Bon Secour which is near Mobile Bay.

Some Welsh scholars have long been skeptical, especially since the Madoc story was promoted in the 19th century by the bar Iolo Morganwg, someone not renowned for his devotion to accuracy in the sphere of history. For many Welshmen, however, the story has long had a certain resonance. Below I will provide information easily accessible regarding Prince Madoc. I hope you enjoy it! A Welsh Monk, St. Caradoc of Llan Cargren, Wales first wrote of Madoc's voyages in the 12th Century. Monks were keepers of records centuries ago. On 3rd of October, 1580, Dr. John Dee made an oral presentation to the English Council at Court where he summarized the Welsh Monks records: "The Lord Madoc, son of Owen Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales lead a colony and uninhabited in Terra Florida or thereabouts."

The story was first published in A True Reporte of the late Discoveries of the Newfound Landes, written by Sir George Peckham in 1583. This document supported the first Queen Elizabeth's claim to the New World.

It was repeated in Humphrey Llwyd's, Historie of Cambria the next year. In 1600 Richard Hakluyt wrote "Principall Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation" which included the story of Prince Madoc.



Professor Hartmann tells us that "On January 13th 1804, an American President of Welsh ancestry, Thomas Jefferson, dispatched a letter to another Welsh-American, Meriwether Lewis, containing a map of the upper Missouri Valley. The map had been prepared by a third Welsh-American, John Evans. John Evans left his home in rural North Wales in 1792. He travelled to London and then across to remote parts of the USA

The above is a stone marker located at the ancient port of Aber-Cerrik at Rhos-on-Sea in North Wales where Prince Madoc departed, and the other one to the left is the one placed near Ft. Morgan, Alabama on Mobile Bay where he landed.

News story of dedication the above Prince Madoc Memorial Plaque, Nov. 10, 1953\_

This page updated March 4th, 2009

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Good News! The Prince Madoc Plaque Resolution passed in the House today, 10 March 2009. So... now comes the hard part again. We are back where we were at the end of the Legislation session last year when the Senate never voted on this so it died. We now need to get the HJR #309 put on the Senate calender and passed. I need all of you to call Senator Barron's office and request that

HJR 309 be put on the calendar and passed. His office number is (334) 242-7858. PLEASE take 5 minutes of your day and make this call. Send an email to all your friends and relatives in Alabama to ask them to do this one little thing. Thanks for all the support and help with this endeavor.

The Prince Madoc Plaque Resolution has returned to the Alabama Legislature in March 2009. The new Resolution number is HJR 309. Please contact your House Rep. and Senator for support of this resolution! Urgent!

Prince Madoc Plaque to be restored!

The Prince Madoc Plaque is being restored for public viewing at the D.A.R. House in Mobile, Alabama. It is being cleaned, then D.A.R. will place it in the garden of the D.A.R. House.

A job well done for all of us involved in getting it taken out of storage at Fort Morgan. The petition has over 1800 signatures which is a fantastic accomplishment for all those who worked tirelessly on a daily basis to spread the word about the petition. David Parry with the Chicago Welsh Tafia, Ceri

Shaw with the Oregon Welsh Society, and Carwyn Edwards with the Welsh League of Arizona have all given so much of their time and energy towards this campaign. The AWA will always be grateful for their support. This campaign has been successful in more ways than one. It has brought together Welsh around the world making new and lasting friendships

The Alabama Welsh Association will continue to work towards broadening the awareness of Welsh contributions to Alabama, and the U.S. each and every day

We will continue to work towards having a Park name after Prince Madoc in Alabama as we feel whether he did or did not land on our shores in 1170, the Welsh have contributed so much to our great state that one of their oldest "Legends" should be honored, thus by doing so would honor ALL WELSH

**Thursday, January 29, 2009**

### **Gwyn A. Williams' "When Was Wales?": Book Review**

Arguing that Welsh identity's about to vanish, and that the one-fifth who speak Welsh out of the two-and-a-half million in the Principality (as of twenty-five years ago) hold the English-speakers in contempt as "*di-Gymraeg*" or "Welsh-less," Professor Williams ends his densely compiled, if relatively brief, Penguin paperback history dramatically. It's a leftist, populist, and straightforward response to romantics and traditionalists. Williams relates a series, from its formation, of rearguard if clever Welsh reactions largely to external, increasingly English, actions.

He criticizes those venerating the "*hen wlad fy nhadau*," the "old land of my fathers." Williams suspects any "Welsh Wales" set apart from the increasingly polyglot, multicultural, majority who leans in their suburbs and cities towards American even more than English culture. Concluding around the time of the miners' strike during Thatcher's term, the 1985 book circles back to its earlier contention: there never may have existed a separate polity. Wales, as soon as it was defined, had to place itself in relation to England.

As its own nation, "only one king in Welsh history is called good." (54) Medieval boasts of bards and kings gain Williams' cold scrutiny. Trapped by complicated "kindred" demands to share power and wealth among relatives, feudal Welsh rulers competed among each other and against the always encroaching Saxons-- their longest if not their only foes. No romanticization here: serfs and slaves remain silent, barely noticed among the chronicles, and Williams reminds us of their erasure.

The Welsh heartlands early on began to contract against the Saxons and their Welsh collaborators. The "*gwerin*" chose allegiance to their language, folk tradition, and soon the Welsh Bible. Their loyalty to Nonconformism and Dissent, and later the Liberal Party and then Labour, marked the separation of Cymry Cymraeg from the Marches, and the borderlands and coasts that the English began to populate and then industrialize. Those areas, especially in the south-east, turned into cities and factories, sharing only regional boundaries with the mountain people, and the north.

The re-definition of Great Britain, by the time of the union with England in 1536, strongarmed Wales as a "junior partner" in what Williams characterizes as a proto-mafia controlled by colonial capital and the imperial Crown. Wales never stood a chance against Westminster, but often weakened early on due to its own disloyal fifth column. The rivalries within medieval Welsh inheritance lured many nobles into offers they could not refuse with the Saxon mobs.

This intricate narrative moves slowly. While a mass market title, this could be used in the

classroom effectively; John Davies' subsequent "*Hanes Cymru*" / "A History of Wales" became a decade later Penguin's first Welsh-language title, and the standard reference in both tongues. Yet, Williams may provide a shorter, if no less rich, guide for readers wanting a history of Wales in half the pages. He also appends maps and a short reading lists for those needing direction; there are no footnotes outside of a few clarifications. Compact yet scholarly, its three hundred closely printed and carefully arranged pages demand steady attention-- if considerable familiarity with British history, Welsh culture, and English politics.

I was alerted to a minor slip when citing Williams. He may have erred in crediting John Dee for taking credit for the term "British Empire" in the 1580s. Dee along with Peckham and Hakluyt popularized this coinage in the later 1500s to propagandize for the Madoc legend revived by Humphrey Llwyd around 1559. This tale could justify British, via the Welsh, pre-Colombian settlement of the Americas, to strengthen Elizabethan anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic claims. This also co-opted Welsh intellectuals, explorers, and leaders into serving their new Queen.

Williams tells such episodes from a typical tale, of Welsh pride mingled with frequent subservience, with mixed detachment and energy. When he discusses highlights such as Glyn Dŵr's rebellion, the Rebecca Riots, the "China" red-light section of Merthyr, the 1926 strike, or the determination to revolt against the Means Tests of the Depression, the tone lightens and quickens. The six pages describing "Imperial Wales" and the Liberal ascendancy under Lloyd George splendidly sum up the dazzling facets of a confident period for a newly diverse nation.

Williams tends to distance himself from Welsh Wales, even as he knows it well. His sympathies, if well explained, side with the much-maligned majority that for him represents 80% of contemporary Wales. They made the modern nation prosper:

"Industrial capitalism came hard and it was fought hard. People were trying to build community in the teeth of it. To those problems, no tradition offered any answer; they had to find their own. They had to walk naked." (191)

Yet, much as he defends their interests, he honestly must face the imminent inclusion of Wales within an Anglo-American hegemony. Under Thatcher, facing nuclear threats and pollution from the sky, Williams characterizes his people with natural sympathy and millennial despair. After fifteen hundred years, their chronicler of his kinfolk wonders if now they're "nothing but a naked people under an acid rain." (305)

(Review posted to Amazon US 1/26/09. I worked on it while watching the Miss America Pageant. Miss Indiana won.) Posted by Fionnchú at 8.40 AM.

## Notes and Documents

### John Dee's "Brytanici Imperii Limites"

KEN MACMILLAN

John Dee's (1527–1609) manuscript compilation "Brytanici Imperii Limites," acquired by the British Library in 1976, plays a vital role in completing our knowledge of the imperial writings prepared by Dee in the late 1570s.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have long known about Dee's *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (1576–77), "Of Famous and Rich Discoveries" (1577), and "A brief Remembraunce of Sondrye foreyne Regions, discovered, inhabited, and partlie Conquered by the Subjects of this Brytish Monarchie" (1580?).<sup>2</sup> But in his diary and his short autobiography, Dee mentions other related materials presented to Queen Elizabeth and her senior advisers. These are referred to as the queen's "title to Greenland, Estertiland and Friseland," declared to Elizabeth and Secretary of State Sir Francis Walsingham in November 1577; "Her Majesties Title Royall, to many forayn countries, Kingdomes, and provinces," and "Imperium Brytanicum," both declared in 1578; and "two rolls of the Quene's Majesties title," presented to the queen and the Lord Treasurer, William Cecil, Lord Burghley in 1580.<sup>3</sup> For many years it was assumed that these had not survived or were alternate names for works already known.<sup>4</sup> Now that we have Dee's "Limites," much more is known about Dee's audiences with the Crown. In his

1. John Dee, "Brytanici Imperii Limites," B[ritish] L[ibrary], Additional MS. 59681. In all quotations, original spelling has been retained but abbreviations have been silently expanded.
2. John Dee, *General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (London, 1577; STC 6459). For the circumstances surrounding its preparation, see David Gwyn, "John Dee's Arte of Navigation," *The Book Collector* 34 (1985): 309–22. The unpublished texts are held in the British Library: "Of Famous and Rich Discoveries," BL, Cotton MS. Vitellius C.VII, fols. 26–269; and "A brief Remembraunce of Sondrye foreyne Regions," BL, Cotton MS. Augustus I.I.Iv.
3. John Dee, *The Private Diary of Dr. John Dee*, ed. J. O. Halliwell (New York, 1842), 4–9. See also John Dee, "The Compendius Rehearsal exhibited to her most gracious majesty at Hampton Court," BL, Cotton MS. Vitellius C.VII, fols. 2–13; and John Dee, *A Letter, Containing a Most Brief Discourse Apologeticall* (STC 6460), where the materials provided to the queen are listed at sigs. A4r–B1v.
4. They are assumed lost or destroyed by Nicholas H. Clulee; see *John Dee's Natural Philosophy: Between Science and Religion* (London, 1988), 180–87. Halliwell believed "Imperium Brytanicum" to be *Memorials* (*Private Diary*, 4n).

recent monograph on Dee, William Sherman briefly describes the contents of "Limites," but important questions remain regarding production and dating, and the way the four documents contained in the compilation fit into Dee's larger imperial canon.<sup>5</sup>

"Limites" is a small quarto volume with a vellum binding. It contains ninety-four numbered and lined pages of single-spaced text, followed by about the same number of blank pages. The British Library catalogue indicates that the compilation was made in 1593 by someone other than Dee. The dating is supported by an examination of the two distinct watermarks showing that the paper was made after 1591.<sup>6</sup> Further proof is found within "Limites" itself, where pedigrees of English and Spanish kings are given up to 1593 (pp. 90–91). This date puts the preparation of the compilation just after Dee presented his "Compendius Rehearsal" to two of the queen's gentlemen on 9 November 1592, from which he had hoped to remind the Crown of his service in exchange for a living. At that meeting, Dee pointed to a table upon which were laid the "two parchment great Rolls full written," which he had prepared more than a decade earlier, and said that he was once offered £100 for them.<sup>7</sup> In response, the gentlemen, probably at the command of Elizabeth, returned three weeks later (2 December) and gave Dee the same amount in gold and silver, for which Dee acknowledged his satisfaction.<sup>8</sup>

Did the gentlemen purchase the two rolls and have them turned by a copyist into a volume more suited for library storage? Or was this payment for a copy of the two rolls to be produced by Dee himself? The entire manuscript is written in the same hand in a very clear script, and the penmanship is consistent with Dee's most careful style. A comparison of the handwriting in "Limites" to that used in Dee's "Thalattokratia Brettaniki" ("The British Sea Sovereignty"), which is appended to the British Library's copy of *Memorials*, and in "Discoveries," both of which are almost certainly in Dee's hand, reveals similarities in letter structure and the use of alternate fonts to distinguish between English and Latin.<sup>9</sup> If Dee was not himself the scribe, it is possible that the task of transcrib-

5. W. H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance* (Amherst, Mass., 1995), 183–89.

6. The first symbol is a lion crossmark with the letters "GB" in the corner, similar to the watermark of paper made in Mantua ca. 1589–93 (Gerhard Piccard, *Wasserzeichen Raubtiere* [Stuttgart, 1987], nos. III.1565–69). The second is a crossbow, also made in Mantua in 1591 (Piccard, *Wasserzeichen Wercug und Waffen* [Stuttgart, 1980], no. XI.2129).

7. "Compendius Rehearsal," fol. 7v.

8. *Ibid.*, fol. 13.

9. The copy of *Memorials* is BL, Department of Rare Books, shelfmark C.21.e.12. The "Synopsis" is BL, Cotton MS. Charter XIII, art. 39, reproduced in Sherman, *John Dee*, 110–12.

ing the rolls was given to a personal amanuensis, who might have learned to imitate his master's hand. But Dee was probably directly involved in the process of transcribing the rolls. It seems likely that Dee would have been paid his £100 for recent services rendered rather than for the rolls themselves or for work he had completed fifteen years before. Nor would a mere copyist employed by the Crown have seen fit to update the pedigree to 1593.

A note in Lord Burghley's hand kept among the British Library's Lansdowne manuscripts indicates that "Limites" came into state custody shortly after its preparation. The note is entitled "A Summary of Mr Dees book" and contains a brief statement of King Arthur's conquests, corresponding to a large portion of "Limites," and two pedigree charts exactly like those in "Limites" (pp. 17–18, 26–60, 77, 90–91).<sup>10</sup> Burghley's document is undated, and Graham Yewbrey assumed that it was prepared from one of the "great rolls" of 1580, at the same time questioning why this was referred to as a "book."<sup>11</sup> The answer is that Burghley's summary was not of the 1580 roll but rather of the 1593 "Limites." In the Lansdowne papers, the summary is situated among manuscripts dating between 1593 and 1597, a placement consistent with the 1593 date. The fact that Burghley read and summarized the compilation suggests that this information was still of some value to the state. At this time, England was still deeply involved in the Anglo-Spanish War and was receiving challenges to its traditional sea sovereignty from Spain, France, Scotland, and the Hanseatic League. These were topics that Dee touched upon in "Limites" and that he addressed more specifically in his "Thalattokratia Brettaniki" of 1597.<sup>12</sup> One wonders if Dee's 1593 "Limites" reminded the Crown of his knowledge in this area and encouraged them to commission (through Edward Dyer, the Elizabethan favorite to whom the treatise was addressed) the 1597 work, when the conflict over sea sovereignty had reached a crisis.

The date of 1593 and strong suppositions about the preparation and custody of "Limites" does nothing to help us understand the dating of the four distinct documents that make up the compilation, which were undoubtedly prepared more than a decade before they were bound together. The first two documents are brief treatises, written in Latin, explaining the current geographical knowledge of the North Atlantic. In the first, "Concerning a reformed location for the island of Estotilant [*sic*] & the region of Drogio" (pp. 4–5), Dee described the lands

10. BL, Lansdowne MS. 94, fols. 121–22.

11. Graham Yewbrey, "A Redated Manuscript of John Dee," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 1 (1977): 253.

12. On the "Thalattokratia Brettaniki," see Sherman, *John Dee*, 192–200.

of Estotiland (northeast Canada), Drogio (an island off Labrador), and the new found land of America (or, as he called it, "Atlantis"). In the second, "Concerning this example of geographical reform" (pp. 7–9), Dee explained the nature of the geographical reformation begun by his "singular good friends" Gerard Mercator and Abraham Ortelius. Although neither of these documents is dated, internal evidence and our knowledge of Dee's activities make dating possible. In the second document, Dee wrote that a more comprehensive account of his brief arguments was undertaken "lately in a large book in our vulgar tongue," a clear reference to "Discoveries," completed in June 1577. Dee corresponded with both Mercator and Ortelius concerning the North Atlantic region during the writing of "Discoveries," matters that were, therefore, fresh on his mind.<sup>13</sup> This dates the documents after June 1577.

The date can be further pinpointed by our knowledge that Elizabeth was the intended audience of these two documents. In the last document in "Limites," Dee wrote that he had previously presented to the queen a "latin Annotation upon Estotiland," a reference to the first document (p. 65). Near the end of the second document, Dee also made reference to an accompanying map, which does not survive, but detailed study provided by Sherman suggests that it was a polar projection, similar to the map Dee prepared for Humphrey Gilbert in 1582, with the figure of Elizabeth in crown and sword, superimposed on the Pacific Ocean as a compass.<sup>14</sup> In the text, Dee charted the northern regions of the world to be explored. His cardinal references were based on the queen's body, using phrases such as "on the left hand side of your majesty's throne," "under your Crown," and "at the right side of your Majesty," clear indications that Elizabeth was the audience (pp. 8–9). In his diary, Dee recorded that between 22 and 28 November 1577, he traveled to Windsor and had three meetings with Elizabeth and Walsingham, during which he "declared to the Quene her title to Greenland, Estetiland and Friseland."<sup>15</sup> It thus seems likely that these declarations represented both of the short pieces included in "Limites," which dates the documents around early November 1577 and suggests the subject of Dee's meeting with Elizabeth at this time. These declarations came three weeks after Gilbert consulted with Dee and then submitted to Elizabeth his "Discourse how to annoy

13. Mercator's letter (in Dutch) was copied directly into "Discoveries," fols. 264–69. It has been translated and examined by E. G. R. Taylor, "A Letter Dated 1577 from Mercator to John Dee," *Imago Mundi* 13 (1956): 56–68. Dee's letter to Ortelius, dated 16 January 1576/7, is in *Abrahami Ortelii . . . Epistulae* (1524–1628), ed. Joannes Henricus Hessels (London, 1887), 1:67.

14. The Gilbert map is in D. B. Quinn, *New American World: A Documentary History of North America to 1612*, 5 vols. (London, 1979), 3:495. See Sherman, *John Dee*, 184, 191–92.

15. *Private Diary*, 4.

the King of Spain," in which he suggested the settling of America to serve as a naval base for an offensive against Spanish interests in Newfoundland and the Caribbean.<sup>16</sup>

The third document in "Limites" is an eight-page treatise, "Unto your Majesties tytle Royall to these forene Regions, & Ilands," dated "Anno: 1578 Maii 4" (pp. 13–21, date on p. 21). In this document, Dee briefly gives historical evidence of the queen's title to overseas territories, using the travels and conquests of King Arthur, St. Brendan, King Malgo, Lord Madoc, the Cabots, and Frobisher's voyages up to 1577. Planning for Frobisher's 1578 voyage began at the end of May, consistent with Dee's dating of the manuscript. This document shares numerous similarities with the "Brief Remembrance." Yewbrey has taken Dee's omission of the 1578 Frobisher voyage as evidence that the "Brief Remembrance" was prepared in May 1578 rather than 1580, the date that appears on the manuscript.<sup>17</sup> Other historians have assumed that the "Brief Remembrance" was at some point presented to Queen Elizabeth as one of the great rolls.<sup>18</sup> The presence of the third document in "Limites" helps to show that both assumptions are probably incorrect. At the beginning of the document, Dee wrote that he was addressing "your lawfull Tytle (Our most gracious soveraigne Quene Elizabeth)" (p. 13); "Brief Remembrance" contains virtually the same opening, but the corresponding passage reads "our Soveraigne Elizabeth her most Gracious Majestic."<sup>19</sup> This suggests that while the document in "Limites" was written expressly for the queen in May 1578, the "Brief Remembrance" was made by Dee for a third party, likely in 1580 as the manuscript attests. Dee was probably not too concerned that the 1580 version was not updated to include Frobisher's final voyage or Drake's circumnavigation. Furthermore, in "Limites" Dee indicates that the two rolls were "Longe" (p. 75), while the "Brief Remembrance," written on the verso of a map of the northern hemisphere, is rectangular but not long. The "Brief Remembrance," therefore, was likely never presented to Queen Elizabeth.

The third document in "Limites" was probably commissioned by the Crown sometime in April 1578. In his "Compendius Rehearsal," Dee recorded that "Her Majesties Title Royall" was "fayre written for her Majesty's use and by her Majesty's commandements—Anno 1578."<sup>20</sup> Dee also noted that this document

16. *Private Diary*, 3. Gilbert's discourse is in the Public Record Office, SP 12/118, 12 (1).

17. Yewbrey, "Redated Manuscript," 249–53.

18. For example, E. G. R. Taylor, *Tudor Geography, 1485–1583* (London, 1930), 135.

19. BL, Cotton MS. Augustus I.I.Iv.

20. "Compendius Rehearsal," fol. 8v.



was written on "12 velam skyns of parchment," something much larger than the third document, which likely filled only one or at most two vellum sheets. In 1597, Dee wrote that the "Brytanici Imperii Limites," the exact title of the fourth and final document in "Limites" and one long enough to fill a dozen vellum sheets, was "compiled speedily at her majesty's commandment."<sup>21</sup> On both occasions, Dee was probably referring to the third and fourth documents in "Limites" together, which were written as companion pieces. At the end of the third document, which Dee probably presented to the Crown shortly after its completion on 4 May, he wrote that more evidence was "shortly to be recorded" (p. 21). This was likely because Dee was required to work "speedily," and he needed to give the Crown something to work with while he took more time to prepare the fourth, much longer and more comprehensive, document. The third document came at a good time, because at the end of May 1578 Frobisher was given instructions to settle some men on a small island off Baffin Island, now known as Kodlunarn, and the following month Gilbert was issued a royal letter to settle land in North America.

This brings us to the fourth document in "Limites," which was, I have suggested, a companion piece to the third document. It is the "Brytanici Imperii Limites" proper, which fills approximately seventy manuscript pages and gives the name to the compilation. This document, possibly prefaced with another copy of the third document, was what occupied the majority of the twelve "full written" vellum skins of parchment given to the Crown in August 1578. This immediately presents a problem, because the fourth document is signed "Your Majesties most humble and Obedient servant, John Dee, Anno Domini 1576; July 22" (p. 74). This date would place its production just before *Memorials*, which was completed in August 1576, and would make it the earliest of Dee's writings on the queen's title to overseas territories. This date is certainly wrong. The fourth document was written as an addition to the third document, dating it 22 July 1578, not 1576.

The evidence for this redating is considerable. To begin with, in his diary Dee wrote that he traveled to Norwich, where the queen was then in residence, with his work entitled "Imperium Brytanicum," a clear reference to the fourth document, on 5 August 1578.<sup>22</sup> Within the manuscript itself, Dee makes explicit reference to *Memorials*, to its non-surviving sequel "The Brytish Complement," and to "Discoveries," which makes it clear that the document in "Limites" came after all of these (p. 73). The third document ends, as we have seen, with an as-

21. BL, Royal MS. 7.C.XVI, fol. 161.

22. *Private Diary*, 4. Sherman has shown that the queen was at Norwich (*John Dee*, 182).

surance that more evidence was soon to be recorded, and an early line in the fourth document reads: "Heere now *in this other parte*, I entend to recorde that which appertaineth *to continewe the memorie of your Majesties just title Royall*" (p. 25, emphasis mine). This suggests that it is the second of two parts and that it was written shortly after the first. Near the end of the fourth document, Dee indicates that it is an "appendix," presumably to the third document, and he argues that the recovery of the British Empire was fully justified by "these 2 recordes brieflie"—that is, by the third and fourth documents together (p. 73). Dee also included in the fourth document a letter he received from Mercator that was explicitly dated "1577" (pp. 58–60). Finally, it seems likely that the manuscripts would have been compiled in the order in which they were written. The evidence thus makes it necessary to redate the fourth document to 1578 and to put it and the third document together. The simple transcription error of turning a questionable-looking "8" into a "6" probably accounts for the misdating of the fourth document in "Limites."<sup>23</sup>

These "2 recordes" were presented to Elizabeth about 5 August 1578 as the two rolls, written on twelve vellum skins of parchment. We know that these rolls were to some extent the content of "Limites" because the final twenty pages in the manuscript compilation, the last part of the fourth document, comprise additions to the text, which once "were noted in the margents of the Longe Rolle" (p. 75). This would have been Dee (or the amanuensis) writing in 1593, explaining that the change in format required a different presentation for the supplemental material. These rolls were returned to Dee after the meetings in August 1578 and were presented to Elizabeth again two years later. Dee wrote that on 3 October 1580 he "delivered [his] two rolls of the Quene's Majesties title" to Elizabeth and Lord Burghley. Because we know that these rolls were first presented in 1578, this means that no new material was offered to Elizabeth at this time. The meeting of October 1580 occurred shortly after Francis Drake returned from his voyage around the world, bringing with him reports of land claimed in the name of Elizabeth, especially "Nova Albion," present-day California (or, as Samuel Bawlf and others have recently suggested, more northerly seacoasts),<sup>24</sup> and a store of commodities taken from Spanish settlements, particularly in the West Indies and South America. The Spanish ambassador resident in England,

23. This error qualifies but does not change the argument that Dee or his amanuensis transcribed the manuscripts, although it does strengthen the case that an amanuensis was involved. Given that this was by far the largest document in the compilation, it is not surprising that the erroneous date of 1576 was copied onto the title page.

24. Samuel R. Bawlf, *Sir Francis Drake's Secret Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America, A.D. 1579* (Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, 2001).

Bernardino de Mendoza, immediately lodged a formal complaint with Elizabeth, alleging that these territories belonged to the king of Spain by virtue of first discovery and the papal bull of donation.<sup>25</sup> As England's foremost expert on the subject of overseas territories, Dee was ordered to court, and he brought with him the 1578 material for his audience with the Crown.



This compilation of Dee's writings allows us to answer a number of bibliographical questions regarding his efforts on behalf of the British Empire. There is strong evidence that Dee or his amanuensis prepared the manuscript compilation in 1593 and gave it to the Crown, in whose custody it remained for an indeterminate period. While in state possession, "Limites" was read by Lord Burghley, who took notes on its contents, which suggests that the material remained valuable to the state. The manuscripts themselves, dating between about November 1577 and July 1578, represent all of the written material prepared by Dee expressly for Queen Elizabeth and her senior advisers regarding her title to new found lands.<sup>26</sup> That is to say, based on Dee's reporting of his own writings on empire, Dee's imperial writings for the English Crown are now extant in their entirety.<sup>27</sup> Only the appearance of the two great rolls prepared in 1578 would shed more light on this reconstruction of Dee's imperial works.

It is important that the works in this compilation were prepared a number of years before Richard Hakluyt presented his "Discourse of Western Planting" (1584) to Elizabeth, which historians have long thought to be the inaugural work of British imperial propaganda.<sup>28</sup> Dee's "Limites" must now be given pride of

25. See *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series (Spanish)*, 1580–86, nos. 44–50, passim; and BL, Add. MS. 28420. See also E. P. Cheyney, "International Law under Queen Elizabeth," *English Historical Review* 20 (1905): 659–60.

26. As Sherman shows, Dee probably also included maps with his treatises, which were not reproduced in "Limites," most likely because the new format made such inclusion difficult. See *John Dee*, 184–86, 189–92; and Sherman, "Putting the British Seas on the Map: John Dee's Imperial Cartography," *Cartographica* 35 (1998): 1–10.

27. This statement requires two qualifications: The first five chapters of "Discoveries" are not extant, although they were summarized by Samuel Purchas in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625), 1:1–48. Second, Dee apparently prepared a document in 1579 entitled "De imperatoris nomine, authority, et potentia" [On the name, authority, and power of the emperor], only the title of which is known to survive ("Compendius Rehearsal," fol. 8v); whether or not this was part of Dee's imperial program is unknown.

28. *A particuler discourse concerninge the greates necessitie and manifolde commodities that are like to growe to this realme of Englande by the western discoverie lately attempted, written in the yere 1584 by Richard Hackluyt of Oxford, known as Discourse of Western Planting*, ed. David B. Quinn and Alison M. Quinn (London, 1993), xv.

place for being the earliest and most comprehensive justification for the expansion of the British Empire to be offered in Elizabethan England."<sup>29</sup> The compilation should be considered by scholars interested in claims to overseas territories during the early modern period, in early formulations of the British Empire, and in the contemporary use of evidence to serve a political and propagandist purpose. Readers will be impressed by Dee's command of ancient, medieval, and contemporary historical, geographical, and legal evidence to advance claims for Elizabeth's sovereign title and to challenge similar claims made by Spain and Portugal.<sup>30</sup>

*University of Calgary*

29. Indeed, taking into account all of Dee's imperial writings, Sherman has termed Dee one of the British Empire's "earliest, boldest, and most ingenious advocates"; *John Dee*, 148–52 at 148.

30. See John Dee, *The Limits of the British Empire*, ed. Ken MacMillan and Jennifer Abeles, forthcoming from Greenwood Press. For an examination of Dee's arguments in "Limites" and an effort to determine his influence on the Crown, see Ken MacMillan, "Discourse on History, Geography, and Law: John Dee and the Limits of the British Empire, 1576–80," *Canadian Journal of History* 36 (2001): 1–25.