

**Cornish in the Celtic Studies Program at
St Michael's College:
A quick personal view**

Toronto Cornish Association

19 July 2018

Prof. Brent Miles



The Matter of Britain

La matière de Bretagne

Jean Bodel, *Song of the Saxons*, Prologue:

N'en sont que **trois materes** a nul home entendant:

De France et de Bretaigne et de Rome la grant;

Ne de ces trois materes n'i a nul semblant.

Li conte de Bretaigne s'il sont vain et plaisant,

Cil de France sont voir chascun jour aparant,

Cil de Rome sont sage et de sen aprenant.

‘For any man of understanding, there are only three subject matters: those of France, Britain and illustrious Rome....The stories from Britain are fictitious but engaging...’

Source: Translation Amy L. Ingram, from Harf-Lancer, ‘Chretien’s literary background, in *A Companion to Chrétien de Troyes*, ed. Lacy and Grimbart, 30.



Source: Higham, Nicholas J. and Ryan, Martin J.,
The Anglo-Saxon World (New Haven, 2013), 21.

La matière de Bretagne: key early works

Arthur and British history

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain* ca. 1138.

Romance

Chrétien de Troyes's Arthurian romances e.g.

Eric and Enide (1170), *Cligés*, *The Knight of the Cart (Lancelot)*, *The Knight with the Lion (Yvain)*, *The Story of the Grail (Perceval)* (1180–1190)

Cornish story of Tristan and Iseult

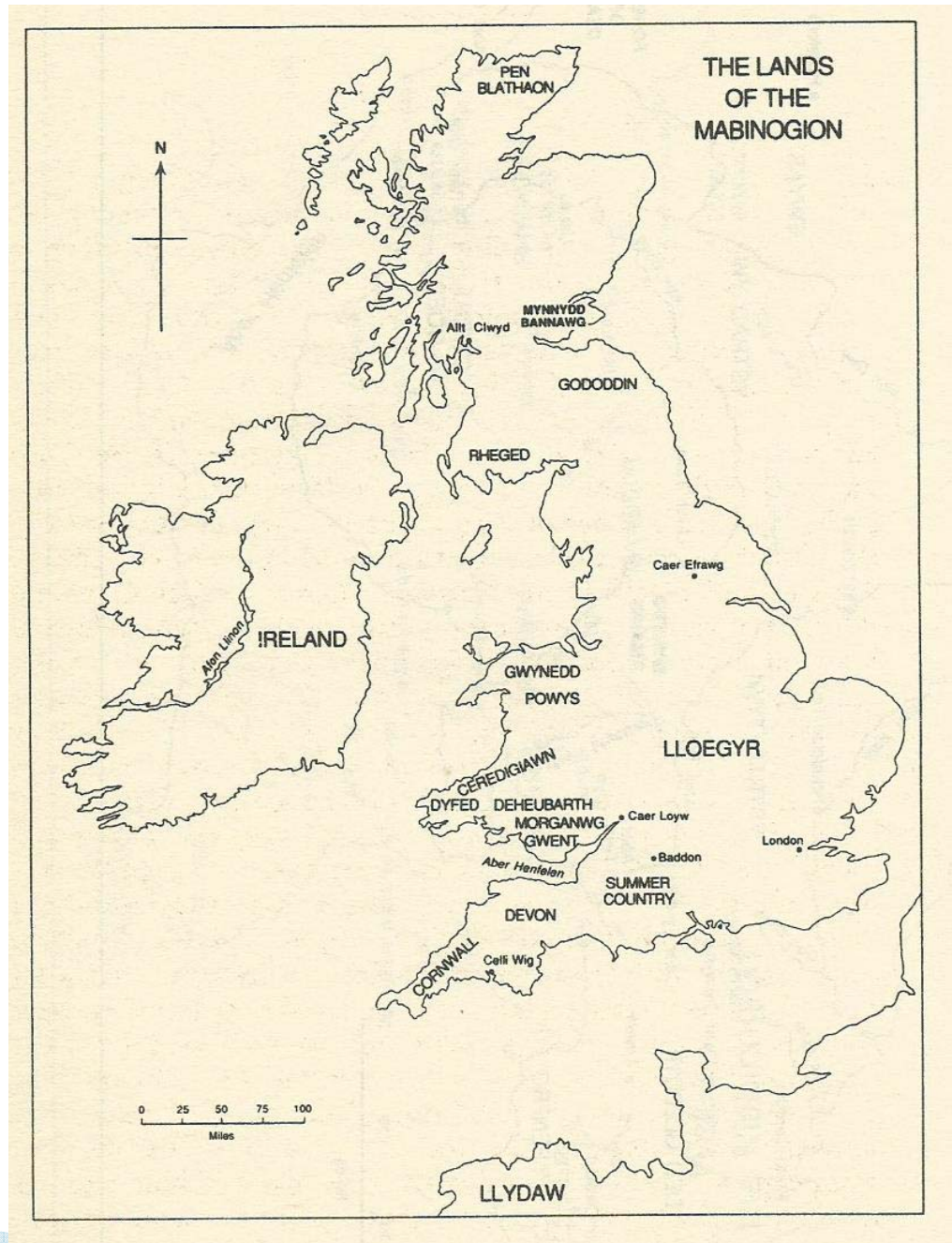
Bérroul, *Tristan*, c. 1191

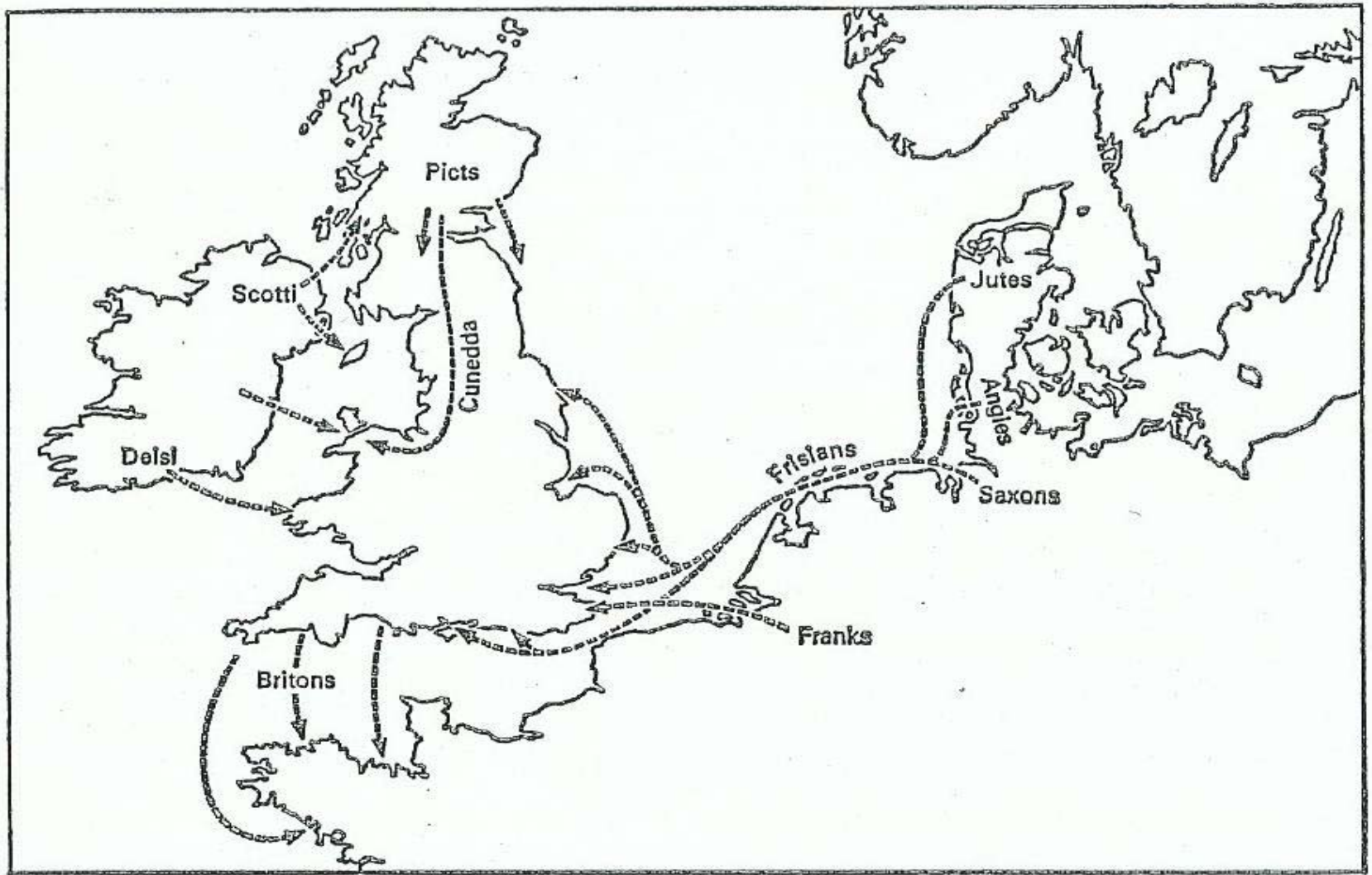
Marie de France, *Chevrefoil*

Gottfried von Strassbourg, *Tristan und Isolde*

Ynys Prydein
'The Island of
Britain', and the
neighbourhood.

Source: Jones and Jones,
The Mabinogion
(Everyman: London, 1993), viii.





Map II. Folk-movements affecting the British Isles in the 5th and 6th centuries.

Source: Map 11 from Alcock, Leslie, *Arthur's Britain* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1971), p. 353.

The Brythonic languages

Welsh tad, mam, brawd a chwaer

Cornish tas, mabm, broder ha whor

Breton tad, mamm, breur ha c'hoar

‘**Brythonic**’ from Welsh *Brython* ‘British’ = ‘British’

William Morris's 'La Belle Iseult', 1858.



Source: William Morris, 'La Belle Iseult'.
Image from the webpage of the Tate Gallery,
London. 1858. 12/11/2014.
<<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/morris-la-belle-iseult-n04999>>

DEUTSCHE
KUNSTFILM-AG
VERLEIH

STEREO  LITON

WAGNER-TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

LIEBESTODT - BRANGANIS RUF - ISOLDES LIEBESTOD

Arnold Fanck - Hertha Tzyer - Wolfgang Windgassen - Brigitte Lindwald-Lerner

STEREO 1934



Early Cornish and Welsh Appearances of Tristan and Yseut

Stone near Castle Dore, Cornwall:

DRVSTA[N]VS HIC IACET CVNOMORI FILIVS

hryt eselt ‘Eselt’s Ford’ in Cornwall

‘Esyllt Fynwen and Esyllt Fyngul’ [Fair Neck and Slender Neck], in the Welsh
Culhwch and Olwen

- *Eselt* ‘she who is worth looking at’
- Mark: Latin *Marcus*; Cornish/Welsh *march*



Source: 'Tristan Stone' near Castle Dore, Cornwall.
16 Nov. 2016. <http://www.king-arthur.co.uk/home/fowey>.

Local Cornish references in Bérroul's *Tristan*

Lantyan (73, 101): a farm first attested in the Doomesday Book, 1086

Saint Samson: church of St. Samson, Golant

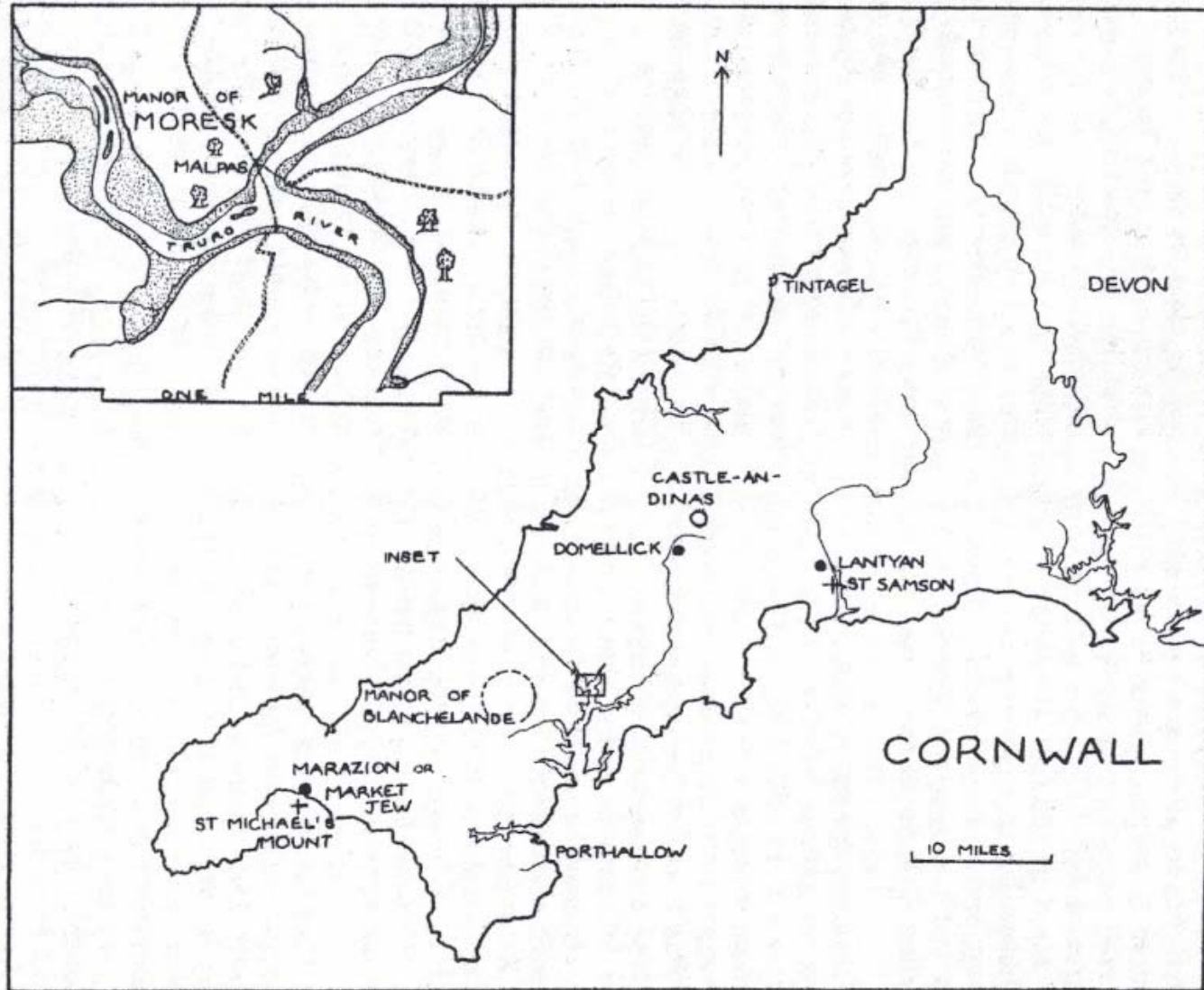
la Blanche Lande (106): the medieval manor of Blanchelande

le Malpas (121): Malpas outside Truro; episode of the *gué aventurous* 'ford at which things are likely to happen'

la forest de Morrois (76): the manor of Moresk

Gué Aventurous = *Hryt Eselt* of tenth century?

Cornish locations in Bérroul's *Tristan*



Source: Padel, O. J., 'The Cornish background of the Tristan stories', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 1 (1981), 53 – 81, at 81.

The Brythonic languages

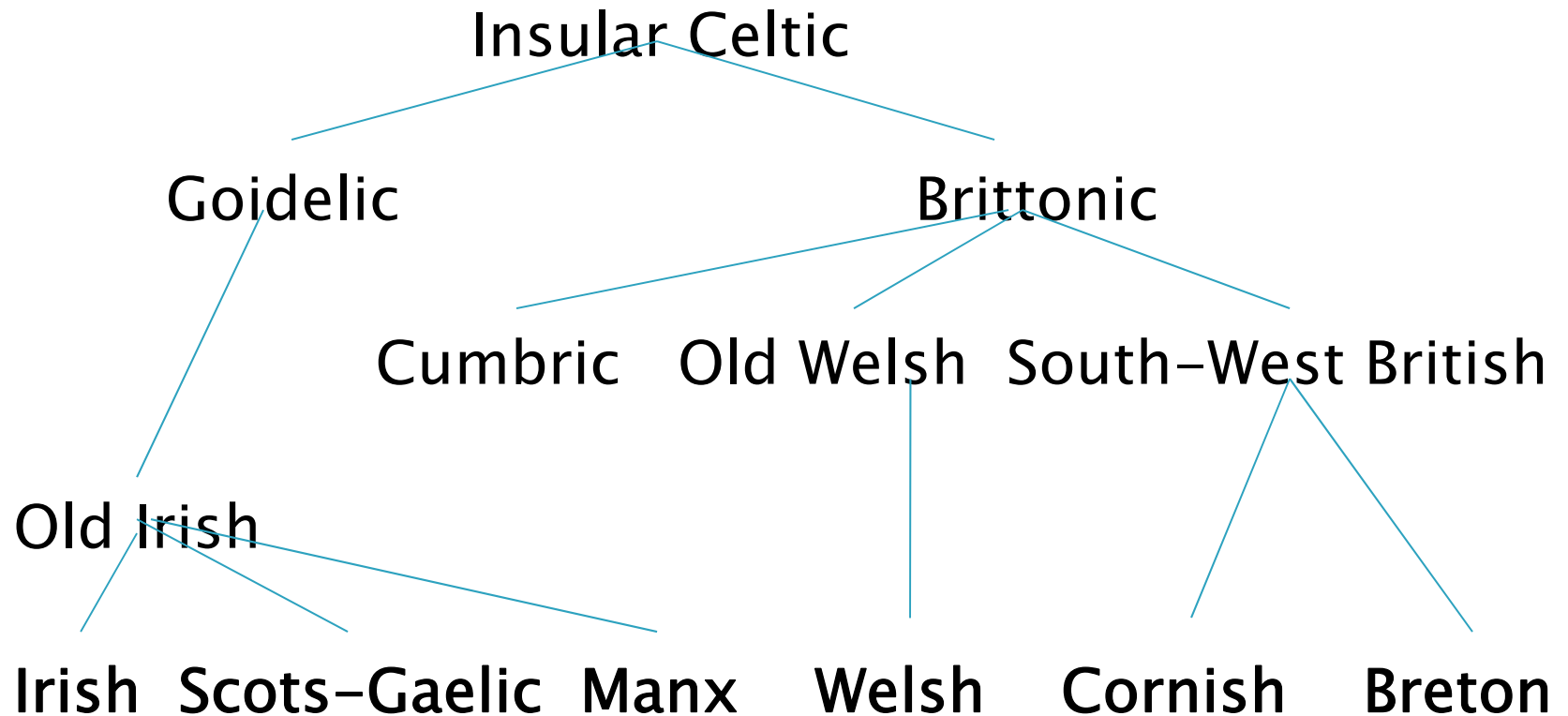
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‘**Brythonic**’ from Welsh *Brython* ‘British’ = ‘British’

Insular Celtic language family: historical development

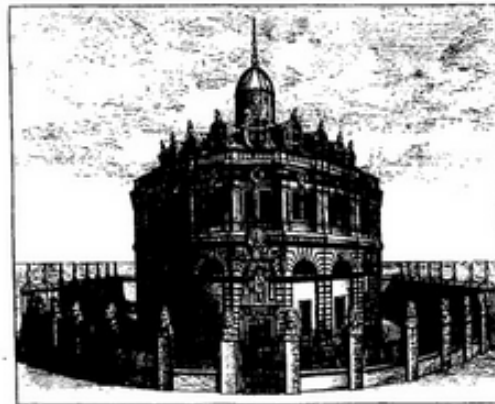


Archæologia Britannica,
GIVING SOME ACCOUNT
Additional to what has been hitherto Publish'd,
OF THE
LANGUAGES, HISTORIES and CUSTOMS
Of the Original Inhabitants
OF
GREAT BRITAIN:

From Collections and Observations in Travels through
Wales, Cornwall, Bas-Bretagne, Ireland and Scotland.

By EDWARD LHUYD M.A. of *Jesus College,*
Keeper of the ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM in OXFORD.

VOL. I
GLOSSOGRAPHY.



OXFORD,
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TIT. VI.
A
CORNISH GRAMMAR.

DHAN TIZ HEGARAZ HA PEDNZHIVIK
POU KERNOU
ANNERH, EHAZ, HAG EYRYS DER VISKVETHEK.

M i a vñe por-dhã (Pednzhivikio Skiznek) bin mñe an gredus qumov, dho' ð dhen en an le kuzi-ma reb *Ashy* pi egyptiaz, rag kement qumov dho Skoet ha gus 'nola Grametek ha ger-levarn *Kerisel*, pas sag ou vi ra goret en *Pop Kress*, an baidh eraguz en an 'Ullit-na mñe vel padithar mit. An gaironek yu hema. Mi a vev Kement he-vedh Gochemmen neb Astodho ha pednzhivikio Kemba, ha sepe erel dre el en G'ul-ker-ma, dho skretã kuzilla kãlditha vi, use an Tavaz *Bretonek* (po kuzh Lavar an Eren-ma) nãpeth moy try veva skretã arig, gen an mñe-fer ha 'n mñe-skennek A'leo an Doukadther *Dreio*, ha sepe erel dho'n *Bretonek Kerisio*. Ha rag hedda an kuzã a kodhar qumov (menditha vi po ny vendithon) dho sei an gredhã drikedhyas a eltan dhoz remã gen hevedh en an koth-divra-ma adho an Daidho Bretonnek erel; viã, an *Kerisel*, an Arvorck (po del yu i keriet gen a soci en *Kendro*, an *Le-narck*) ha 'n *Kerisio* po 'n *Siet-Bretonek* er lavryz an *Elsed-dre* an *divra* hag an G'ulker *Dredhy*; ple ma baidhyz baidh (del knep emm pedret en Kodharã Tavazo el goret en an Lavar-ma) nãpeth yadik fuz kuzã gñe, met emoldh gyl-snyz py hvarnãz pñez an Tavaz Bretonnek. Lemmyn gen na veva an yad Eren 'nammek an baidh gylevra vith rag nyryz a 'n Tavazo-ma (fuz neb levro bin Arvorck ha Frenkek) goretã d'nyz, mi rykovez me houn Kement dho skretã neb 'nammek ha gylevar rag 'n Tavaz hoci ha rag an *Gedhã*. Mi a gon peddhã ny kãlditha Trigoio an dhoz vñe-ma goretã an ober-ma pñta gylt tro yu goretã gon vi. Met baidh mi bendret ny veva gylt neb riy (e) goretã vel goretã veth; ha kerkeryz ny kãlditha an baidh bobodhã-ma pñta erel em an dho daldh yad di. Ha en kuzemmen-na ma neb elpervã dhoz ny veddons an Lemmyn Pednzhivik ha ma-levreck gyllyã a fero dho Eren pã-pã, neb mar peve gylevar ðe. *Kerisel* ha *Gedhã* skretã arig ny venditha vryz agryz an pyprio hema; ha py ny kuzov vev nebã bin adho 'n Tavazo aglyvryz, en an le-va-ma ny kin e venditha datagryz by Gramatikio hag gylevro e hama, mar vevã gylgiz a vith; an dala ryg me (gen an Trajãpant rãryã) datagryz a an ragoretã 'nammek ha 'n gylevra *Ashy-rek* pi *Gedhã*.

Met baidh (ur an parãrã) del ny venditha vi rag tra veth, kement qumov dho gñi pã bennag dre er a qurthã ma alow; en dala mi rakemera kibãntã obdu dho levari torth an Lemer, veth el bñt ret y vi levariort qorth nebã benderyasã adho 'n Tavazh *Kerisel* dre qumov an Tavaz *Kerisio*, a sãlditha neb bennak an obdu drevith sojãthã, drikedhoal. An fir' a 'rykemena vi dho doka an nebã skizem-ma a 'n Tavazh *Kerisel*, ð erelã drikedhyant dhoz genãp an bidd en Goretã (h) *Keris* en erped-eth en pñe ry; ha emoldh dre an heveler Gertã dhoz neb Pednzhivikio a 'rypant skrypi agov fuz gertã *Kerisel*: en emoldh *Mr. John Key* pãp a 'n Thetã itãl en *Par Eren*, *Mr. Eymok* a 'n *aglyv-ryz* pñe ry, *Mr. James Trejãpant* a *Cobben reb Frennek*, ha *Mr. Nãdã Bãdã* a *Nedje* en pñe Pãd. Met me a gretã an *Rãdã gerdã* a 'n *Dyãdã* dhoz vev levar skretã *Kerisel*, goretã en ma dala gen an *Mit-durthã* ha 'n *Mit-gordhyz*. Diz en *Dhoz Dr. Juscelus Trejãpant* hãk *Ker-dã*; ha 'n merkemnek ha 'n merkeryz beddithãk *John Ashy Eyz*, nyryz a 'n *Somervio* *Pop Kress* en *Leandã*, ha 'n *aglyv-ryz* *Mr. Keryz*, nab dar Oghentozã an *aglyvryz* hãk a 'ryg rãpã an levroqã dhoz *Zeytãk*; hag yu heb puro veth, bennã an skemika a 'n ðt nei en Tavazh *Kerisel*. *Aglyz* an vev skretã-levro qurthã, *Mr. Ashy* a gretã neb *Tavaz Bretonnek*, dhoz-skretã dhoz fuz ðto, en *Levra Otho* en *Leandã*, ha (del 'ryg e hã pñe hoveadh e valenegh vãt yu an heveler abothoã kuzã hag udho) e 'ryg skretã dhoz-mã vãrydho (e). Pa 'rygryz an levar, mi a vevã por-dho tro sag ð e gylevra *Kerisio* hoveadh e hãã *Ladin* (skretã en temmã drevithã) *Philolarium Wallicum*; met gylevra *Kerisel*, an dre (hoveadh ma rybãnt) veth rãry dhoz-mã gant kessilã Lemer Bretonnek 'n moda qurthãntã an gertã *Ladin*-ma. viã. *Angelus dõl*; *Socia*, *divra*; *Membrum*, *erel*; *Supercilium*, *divra*; *Collum*, *ovra*; *Palatum*, *Ashy*; *Mentum*, *erel*; *Tibia*, *obdu*; *Virtus*, *divra*; *Rigina*, *Kerisio*; *Valgus*, *reth*; *Pop*, *fer*; *Socia*, *erel*; *Mentum*, *ovra*; *Fons*, *divra*; *Limbã*, *erel*; *Milvus*, *erel*; *Bala*, *ovra*; *Ram*, *erel*; *Pallã*, *erel*; *Echinus*, *erel*; ha fuz gertã erel rag ðãdhoz skretã emnek sei *Tã Kẽdã*. Mi a vevã peddhã ny kãlditha qumov dhoz, a hedda gon moy 'n le-velepev tr'el an gylevra bin Bretonnek-mã box *Ashyrek* po Bretonnek *Pop Lavar* en *Print*; Rag ma

(e) neb ðe. (f) *Pop Ullit*. (g) *Bidh*. *Or. Pñta*. A. 14.

DHAN TIZ HEGARAZ HA PEDNZHIVIK

POU KERNOU

ANNERH, EHAZ, HAG EYRYS DER VISKVETHEK.

MI a uor por-dhá (Pednzhivikio Skientek) báz mēr an gýndan uarnav, dho' il dheuh en an le kenza-ma neb *Apolog* pý efgyziantz, rag kemeraz uarnav dho Skrefa ha gora 'mēz Gramatek ha ger-levran *Kerniast*, pan rag ou vi na genez en *Pou Kernow*, na huñth tregyez en an 'Ulaz-na mui vel podhar miz. An guironeth yu hemma. Mi a vev Kelmez herpedh Gorhemmen neb Arlodho ha pednzhivikio Kembra, ha nepre erel dre ol an G'las-kor-ma, dho skrefa ketella kaldzha vi, ur an Tavaz *Brethonek* (po kotha Lavar an Enez-ma) nepeth moy trý veva skrefyz arig, zen an mēr-fyr ha 'n mēr-skientek A'ho an Deskadzher *Dewies*, ha nepre erel abar'n *Brethonek Kembra*. Ha rag hedda an karg a kodhaz uarnav (mendzha vi po ny vendzham) dho rei an guella dyskuedhyans a ellam dhan tena sñuz brederez en an Koth-davazo-ma adro an Dialektho Brethonek erel; viz. an *Kerniast*, an *Arvorek* (po del yu i kreiez zen a nei en *Kembra*, an *Lezant*) ha 'n *Kelzantek* po 'n *Stet-Vrethonek* ez laveryz en *Ekval-dir* an *Albar* hag en G'laskor *Uordbyn*; ple ma kuithyz huñth (del ketep onan prederez en Kothmaz Tavazo el guelez en an Levar-ma) nyz en ydnik liaz kant zēr, mez enuēdh guir-cātyr pý lavarantz pñez an Tavaz Brethonek. Lemmyn pan na veva na ydn livan 'rammātek na huñth gerlevran vēth rag uynyn a 'n Tavazo-ma (sau neb levro bian Arvorek ha Frenkek) gurēyz dýrag, mi rykavaz me honan Kelmez dho skrefa neb 'rammātek ha gerlevar rag 'oz Tavaz hwei ha rag an *Godhalek*. Mi a uon por-dhá trý kaldzha Trigerio an dhēau ulaz-ma gurēiz an ober-ma pýlta guel tro yu gurēiz geno vi. Mez huñth mi brediraz trý peva guel neb riu (e) guerraz vel guerraz vēth; ha kekeffryz trý kaldzha an huēl bobodzhak-ma piga erel an'an dho dallah ydn dī. Ha en ketermen-na ma neb esperans dhebm trý veddons an Lennerio Pednzhivik ha maz-brezek, gēffya e foto dho Estren pel-pou, neb mar peve gerlevar &c. *Kerniast* ha *Godhalek* skrefyz arig ny vendzha vefga agrafa an papyrio hemma; ha pý ny kouze mēz nebuz bian adro 'n Tavazo raglaveryz en an levar-ma pý kien e vendzha dazagrafa hy Grammatēkio hay gerlevro e honan, mar venz guēfgez a vēz; an della ryg me (zen an Trayllyantz reizyz.) dazagraf a an raggorryz 'rammātek ha 'n gerlevran *Arvorek* pý *Gal-Vrethonek*.

Mēz huñth (ur an nath aral) del ny vendzha vi rag tra vēth. kemeraz uarnav dho tñl ydn henaz des

GERNER
Kyrnweig.



A.

AB 10

98

A The.

From ... river falling into
the sea or
brook
falling into a lake
for river.

Abot. 7500 An

+ A berth, A sacrifice
ov. nis. a pe r h.

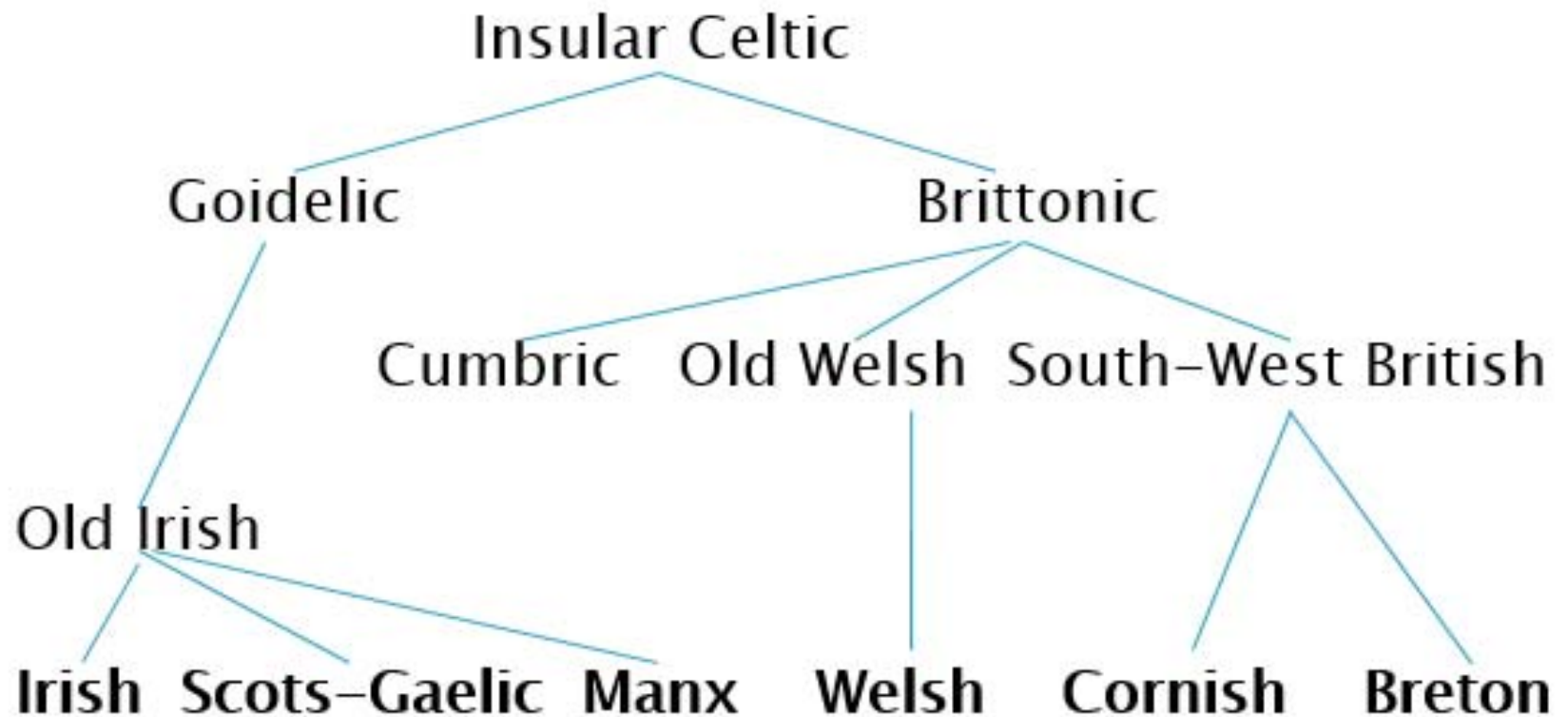
ABORT
aborts in the
womb

21.

In Wales & Scotland it
signifies, the fall of A-brant Aelfa
a lesser water into a
greater, and is fre-
quently applied to de-
note, towns, castles &
villages (whether inland
or maritime) so situated.
As Aber-~~...~~, Aber Dy-
vi, Aber Kony, Aber
Deen, Aber Veth, Aber
Dora &c. The word
added to Aber, is al-



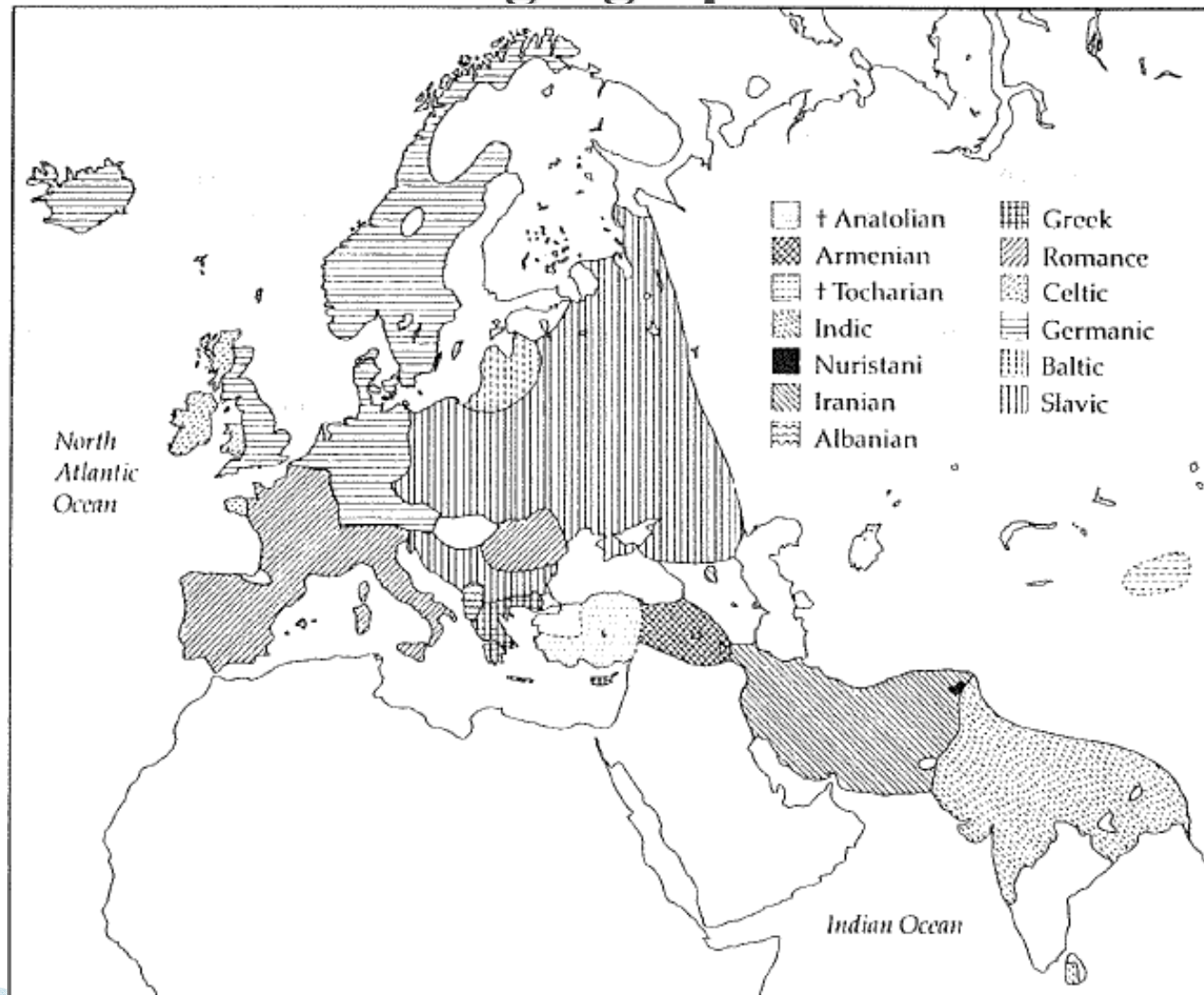
Insular Celtic language family: historical development



Sir William Jones (1786)

‘The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that **no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source**, which, perhaps, no longer exists; there is a similar reason...for supposing that both the *Gothick* and **the Celtic...had the same origin with the *Sanscrit***; and the old *Persian* might be added to the family’.

The Indo-European language family: traditional geographic base



Source: Beekes, Robert S.P., *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics* (Amsterdam 1995), 302.