

# Identification of the Battle Locations

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The following table shows the text from each of the two original manuscripts that were used in the analysis for *The Battles of Arthur* by Beth Nion. Each line in the manuscripts is accompanied by Welsh, Cornish and Breton words that are similar to or the same as the name of each river or location from the manuscripts. A modern location is identified, and a short description shows how the connection was made from the text in the original manuscripts to the modern location.

*From Harley manuscript*

From Vatican manuscript

	<b>Nennius (Latin)</b>	<b>Welsh</b>	<b>Cornish</b>	<b>Breton</b>	<b>Modern Location</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>In ostium fluminis quod dicit glein</i> <u>iuxta hostium fluminis quod dicitur glein</u>	gleindid = cleanness, beauty, purity glen, narrow valley glan, brink, shore	glan = bank; gl•n = clear, pure	glein = clear (Fr. claire)	Beaulieu R., Dorset

The Latin "in ostium fluminis Glein" means "at the mouth of the river Glein." The word "glein" can be either "glen" or, more likely, glein, clear or beautiful. One possibility is the Glen River in Lincoln, upriver from the Welland, which flows into the Wash. Another more likely possibility, based on an etymology for the word Glein or gl•n as pure or beautiful, is the Beaulieu River in Dorset, as "beaulieu" means "beautiful place" in French, a place name changed after the Norman Conquest.

<b>2</b>	<i>Super aliud flumen quod dicitur dubglas in regione linnuis</i> <u>super aliam amnem quae nominatur brittanice duglas quae est in regione linnuis</u>	du = black, glas = green/blue llyn = flax llyn = deep pool	du = black; glas = blue, green, grey	du = black; glas = blue, green, grey	Blackwater, Essex
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Four battles were fought on this river. The Latin means "above the river that is called Duglas in the region of Linnuis." There are several interpretations for the meaning of Linnuis. Linnuis could be another name for Lindsey, Lincoln; there was also an area called Lindensis around Ilchester. Or it could refer to a region of linn, llyn (Welsh), or flax. For example, linen and linseed both come from the flax plant. A major flax growing area that has been an exporter of rope and flax products since ancient times is the region around Bridport, in Devon. Linn also means deep pool, while duglas means dark blue or black in Welsh. There are many Duglas or Douglas rivers in Britain and Scotland, but there is only one in the area near Bridport, the Blackwater that flows into the Axe. This river further marks the boundary between three counties and has been an important boundary for centuries.

However, the large tidal river in Essex, near an important Arthurian center Camulodunum, now Colchester, is a more likely candidate, and the words "in regione linnuis" would refer to the part of the river that is deep, the lower reaches, as opposed to upper, narrower reaches of the river, which is narrower. A possible connection to a battle could be the Romano-British tomb found on Mersey Island, on the shore of the Blackwater.

<b>3</b>	<i>Super flumen quod vocant bassas</i> <u>Super flumen quod vocatur bassas</u>	Bas = shallow	bas = shallow	bas = shallow	Shalbourne, Wiltshire
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The Latin means "above the river Bassas." The word Bassas means shallow. On Ptolemaic maps the Vezallais Estus, today the silted up Parret/ Brue levels, just west of Glastonbury, in Somerset, a shallow

tidal estuary in Arthurian times. could have been the Bassas Another, more likely, possibility is the river called by this name since early Anglo-Saxon times, the Shalbourne, Wiltshire. (955 Scealdeburnan)

- 4 *In silva celidonis* celyn = holly kelly = grove, Chute Forest, Wilts.  
 celynnog, abounding in copse  
in silva celidonis, quae holly  
bryttannice cat coit celidon cat = part of  
nominatur

The description for this location differs in the two manuscripts. The second gives the additional tag line "cat coit celidon" or "a part of the wood celidon" in Welsh. Celidon can be derived from celi, heaven, celli, grove or from kel, cell or church. Don is a hill fort. (Celli is ultimately derived from the Celtic word ceto, meaning woodland.) The meaning of celidon could be simply a wood, possibly a holly wood, and possibly identifiable with Chute/Savernake forest on the east fringe of Wiltshire. Savernake forest in 934 was 'Safernoc silva' or 'boundary wood,' forest of the boundary [between Saxon and Briton]. Possibly "cat coit celidon" means Dolbury camp in the Mendips, where "Churchill" is "Crich-hill," "barrow" or moot hill.

- 5 *in castello guinnion.* gwyn = white, holy gwynlan = gwiniek = Winchester, Hants  
*in quo arthur portavit* gwent = a plain vineyard; abundant in  
*imagin~e st~e marie* gwyn = white, vines; kastell =  
*p=petuc virginis sup=* fair, holy castle  
*humeros suos*  
iuxta castellum guinnion in  
que idem artur sca~e marie  
d~i genitricis semp=q:  
virginis super humeros  
suos...

The Latin means "at castle or fort Guinnion." Guinnion is derived from gwent, a plain: Winchester, Hampshire, is the "castle in the plain."

- 6 *In urb~e legionis.* leog= small beach Caerleon, Monmouth  
 worm  
in urbe leogis. - quae  
bryttanice cair lion dicitur:

The Latin means "in the city of the legion" and can thus refer to several possible cities, Caerleon, Chester, or York. The identification with Caerleon is based on the tag line in the Vatican manuscript "that the Britons call cair lion" or Caerleon.

- 7 *In litore fluminis quod* traeth = shore; tref = treth = sand, Trev = R. Trieux; Rother/Arun, Sussex  
*voca~t tribruit.* town, home; rhodwydd sand beach,  
in litore fluminis. - quod = embankment to protect seashore  
nos vocamus traht trevrott. a ford, ford  
 rhyd = ford

The longer Latin description means "on the shore of the river that we call the shore Trevrott." The implication of this statement is that Trevrott is the Anglo-Saxon term for a river known by another name, possibly the Tribruit. The ancient Trisantos in Sussex is today's Rother/Arun river. Trevrott can mean home-ford, and could be identifiable with the Trent or Piddle near Wareham. The Bristol Avon, which was anciently the Trole, is another possibility, but the most likely candidate is the Rother/Arun river complex in Sussex.

- 8 *In monte qui dici~t agned* Brecknocks, near  
in monte qui nominatur Neath, Glamorgan  
breguoin. ubi illos in  
fugam vertit . que nos cat  
bregion apellamus.

The two manuscripts differ in their descriptions which gives an additional clue. The Latin means "on the

mountain that is called Breguoin" (the Brecknocks), and "below Ned." Thus this location can easily be identified with Neath, the Roman Nedd in Glamorgan. Most likely this battle was against the Irish, not the Saxons.

- 9** *in monte badonis in quo currue~r inb uno die ~ngenti sexaginta viri de uno impet~u arthur. contra saxones durissime arthur bellum in monte badonis penetravit. in quo corruerunt impau illius una Dcccc.xl. viri nulla sibi brittonum in aditorium adherente.*      baddon = bath      Liddington Castle, Wilts

Formerly called Badbury (955 Beddebury) this hill fort is the most likely location for this battle. Often placed at Bath (from "baddon") the word "badonis" can also mean "boat" or "plague" – "don" is a hill fort.

- 10** *Camlann*      camlan = ferocious battle (obsolete)      cam = crooked      kammellenn = curved line      R. Wylie, Wilts

Cam = crooked; Camlann came to mean a ferocious battle in later times, though now the term is obsolete. Finds around Queen Camel, west of South Cadbury, are evidence of a great battle of the period. The names Queen Camel, East Camel, and South Cadbury are all derived from the Welsh "cyman," "cymid," or "camawn" (battle) and "cad" (battle), so that "Queen Camel" was originally "cyman camawn" (battle) and Cadbury was "battle hill" probably "cymandun" or "cad-dun", later, with "dun" (hillfort) changed to Anglo-Saxon "bury," its equivalent. South Cadbury, a striking hill fort, could have been called "Marghidun" or "Marghidunum" in Arthurian times, from "marghi" boundary, and "dun" or "dunum" Latinized "hill fort", in other words, the hill fort on the boundary between Briton and Saxon.

Another, more likely, possibility is the Wylie, recorded in 688 as Wileo (flumen) and derived from gwili tricky or crooked stream; it is also the site of finds of battle massacres at Heytesbury and Knook.

- avalon*      avallon = apple orchard      aval = apple; avelenneg = orchard      Near Glastonbury, Somerset, an island in the Meare, an ancient lake still visible in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- Camelot*      Roman Camelodunum, now Colchester, Essex

Taken to avalon, buried at Tintagel (Artognov stone, found 1998).