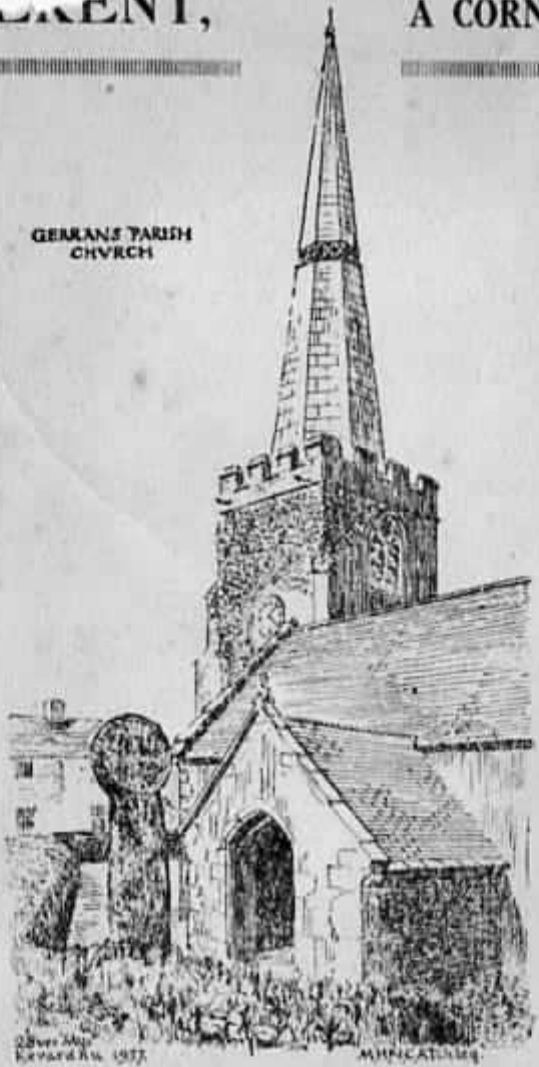
Gladys Nalton

S. GERMANS, A CORNISH SAINT



BY THE

Rev. CANON GILBERT H. DOBLE, M.A.

"CORNISH SAINTS" SERIES. No. 41.

SAINT GERENT

(GERENDUS, GERENS).

BY THE

Rev. GILBERT H. DOBLE, M.A.,

Vicar of Wendron, Honorary Canon of Truro Cathedral and Examining Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Truro.

Author of

'S. Mawes,' 'S. Euny,' 'S. Mawgan,' 'S. Winwaloe,' 'S. Corentin,' 'S. Hermes,' 'S. Carantoc,' 'S. Gwinear,' 'S. Melaine,' 'S. Feock,' 'S. German,' 'SS. Mewan & Austol,' 'S. Petrock,' 'SS. Docco & Kew,' 'S. Melor,' 'S. Nonna,' 'S. Briec,' 'SS. Sithney & Elwin,' 'S. Senan,' 'Four Saints of the Fal,' 'S. Neot,' 'S. Selevan,' 'S. Tudy,' 'S. Clether,' 'S. Cuby,' 'John Wesley in Cornwall' and 'A John Wesley of Armorican Cornwall,' 'SS. Nectan & Keyne and the children of Brychan in Cornwall,' 'S. Constantine & S. Merryn,' 'S. Symphorian,' 'Two Cornish Parishes in the Eighteenth Century,' 'S. Decuman,' 'Breage in the Eighteenth Century,' 'S. Perran, S. Keverne & S. Kerrian,' 'S. Augustine of Canterbury in Anjou,' 'Les Saints du Cornwall,' 'Les Saints Bretons,' 'S. Gudwal,' 'S. Day,' 'Cornish Church Kalendar,' 'Some Remarks on the Exeter Martyrology,' 'Miracles at S. Michael's Mt. in 1262,' 'S. Meriadoc,' 'S. Samson in Cornwall,' 'S. Yvo,' 'S. Sulian & S. Tysilio,' 'S. Gennys,' S. Budoc,' 'St. Ewe,' 'S. Cadoc,' etc.

With a History of the Parish of Gerrans, arranged from the Notes of the late Mr. Charles Henderson, M.A., Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; and a description of the Church of Gerrans by Mr. M. H. N. Cuthbert Atchley.

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SAINT GERENT

King of Cornwall.

The patron Saint of the Parish of Gerrans is not, as is usually the case in this county, an old Celtic Bishop, or Priest, or Monk, or Hermit, but a King, and the only King of Cornwall about whose reign anything detailed is recorded. Saint Constantine, it is true, was also a King of Cornwall, but it is as a Monk, after his conversion and withdrawal from the world, that he appears in Celtic hagiography, and practically nothing is told us of his life when he was on the throne. But Gerent is described in Welsh and Breton *Lives* of Saints and in the Exeter Martyrology, not as a Saint, but as a Monarch at whose court Saints were welcome, and who was intimately connected with several personages greatly honoured in the Celtic Church; though at an early period (as we shall see) he came to be regarded as a Saint himself, exactly as Ethelbert, King of Kent, the enthusiastic convert and protector of S. Augustine, the builder of Churches and Monasteries, whose body was buried among those of the first archbishops of Canterbury, has his name in kalendars and martyrologies.[1] The subject of this booklet is therefore one of unique interest. It seems to promise to provide us with a glimpse into the social and political life of Cornwall before it had been conquered by the West Saxons, while it was still an independent Celtic kingdom.

I.

We will deal first with the Welsh traditions about King Gerent.

One of the chief sources of our knowledge of the early ecclesiastical history of Wales is the celebrated *Book of Llandaff*, written some time after 1133. It contains a *Life of Saint Teilo*, who

[1] A Saint Gerein was honoured at *Merthir gerein*, a place in the parish of Magor in Monmouthshire, which is mentioned in a charter in the Book of Llandaff (p. 224, ed. 1840). *Merthyn Geryn* is mentioned in the *Valor* of 1535. Willis says (*Survey of Llandaff*, 1719) that its "site is unknown, otherwise than that it stood near Tintern Abbey." But it seems hardly possible that this saint should be the Cornish King. More probably he was a local Welsh saint.

is described as an "Archbishop of the Church of Llandaff," (though it is probable that in reality he was a saint of Llandeilo Fawr in Carmarthenshire). Its author was Geoffrey Stephen. This *Life* tells us that—

"Shortly after Saint Teliavus had received the pastoral care of the Church of Llandaff," he was obliged to leave Wales, "on account of a pestilence which nearly destroyed the whole nation. It was called the Yellow Pestilence[1], because it made everyone it attacked yellow and bloodless: it appeared to men in the form of a column consisting of a watery cloud . . . passing over the whole region. . . . Everything living that it touched with its pestilential breath either died straightway or became sick unto death. . . . It attacked Mailcon, King of Guenedotia, and destroyed his realm." Many of the survivors fled from the country, some going to Ireland, and some, led by Teilo, to France (*in Franciam*). "At the bidding of an angel, Saint Teliavus arose, taking with him certain of his suffragan bishops and clergy of different ranks, with many others, men and women, and went first to the region of Cornwall (*ad Cornubiensem regionem*), and was well received by Gerennius the King of that country, who treated him and all his party with every mark of honour. And while they were enjoying his hospitality, King Gerennius spoke in homely fashion to S. Teliavus the Bishop, saying: 'Father and Lord, I pray and beseech you to receive my confession, and to be my confessor in the Lord.' And the pontiff consented, and received his confession, and made him a solemn promise, speaking with assured confidence, that he should not see death till he had first, received the Body of the Lord consecrated by himself. After this the Saint continued his journey, with his companions, and coming to the peoples of Armorica was well received by them." S. Samson, Archbishop of Dol, welcomes Teilo with joy, and the latter sojourns for a considerable space of time in Brittany. He causes a fountain to spring up at 'Cai' (apparently Carfantin) near Dol, which, the writer tells us, sailors desiring a favourable wind are wont to clean, at the same time asking for the prayers of S. Teilo.[2] He and S. Samson planted an orchard of fruit-bearing trees stretching from Cai to Dol (a distance of three miles) which "is called, to this day, the Groves of Teliavus and Samson." Meanwhile the Pestilence had ceased, and, after seven years and seven months had passed, "one day S. Teliavus the

[1] It devastated Wales in the years 547—550, according to the *Annales Cambriae*, and Ireland in 548 (*Annals of Ulster*.)

[2] Similar practices are common at holy wells in Brittany.

Bishop called to him his family, that is, the people of his country, and said to them, 'Know ye, my children, that our King Gerennius is grievously afflicted with a painful disease, and I believe that through it he will shortly depart from this life, as an angel hath told me. For when I was coming to this country, passing through his land, I visited him, and he honourably and hospitably received me and those with me certain days. And I pledged my word to him, promising him in the Lord that he should not see death till he received from me the Body of the Lord, and so should depart from this world. Therefore prepare for us our ship.' A large bark having accordingly been provided, S. Teliavus entered into it, accompanied by many learned teachers and certain other Bishops, by whose labours the British nation might be renewed in holiness after the pestilence. Then he gave commandment, saying, 'Take with you this stone coffin (*sarcophagus*), that the body of Gerennius may be placed therein.' And they, wondering, replied that, on account of its great size, they could not do so, 'for ten yoke of oxen,' said they 'could not move it from its place.' But he, trusting in the Lord and in the prayers of his Bishops and of the people, bade them cast it into the sea before the prow of the ship, saying that it should come to the shore without an oar being used; and so it happened. As they were sailing, and were half way across the sea, another ship met them, and, as the sailors of one were conversing with those of the other, a Bishop sent by Gerennius announced that the King was dying, but was awaiting the coming of S. Teliavus and the fulfilment of the promise. The two ships, sailing on together, arrived at the port called Dingerein: and lo! the aforesaid stone, which had been cast in to the sea, appeared between them. S. Teliavus went straight to where the King lay, and found him still alive. Having received the Lord's Body from his hand, the King departed unto the Lord. His body was carefully placed by his blessed confessor in the aforesaid sarcophagus, and commended to God. After this the holy man, accompanied by the clergy and people in great numbers, made his way back to his episcopal see, and abode there unto the end of his life."

Now the historical value of the *Life of S. Teilo* is very slight indeed. The Book of Llandaff, as Mr. Wade-Evans says[4], "contains a mass of old material," but it "was written with the set purpose of making believe that there was a long line of Landavian bishops . . . going back to St. Dubricius." He points out that a good deal of the

[4] *Welsh Christian Origins*, pp. 156, 158.

Life of S. Teilo is copied from an older *Life* of the saint, which represented him as living in Carmarthenshire, not at Llandaff. Its author "certainly had genuine traditions about Teilo from which to draw, but whether one should count amongst them the story of Teilo's flight to Brittany from the ravages of a 'Yellow Plague' is doubtful." But it is clear, at any rate, that at the time when it was written there were dim remembrances in South Wales of a Cornish King called Gerennius. We have other evidence of traditions about this King existing in Wales in the early Middle Ages. The Life of S. Cybi (*Vita Sancti Kebii*), written apparently at Brecon Priory in the 12th century, tells us that the father of *S. Kepius* was called "Salomon, who was the son of Erbin, the son of Gereint, the son of Lud." In the old Welsh genealogy known as "The Pedigrees of the Saints" Gereint is given as the son of Erbin, instead of *vice versa*. No 30 states that "Cybi was the son of Selyv, the son of Geraint, the son of Erbin, son of Custenyn Gorneu (*i.e.* the Cornishman)," and No 33 of another version (Rees, No. vii) is "Iestyn was the son of Gereint, son of Erbin, son of Custennyn." Mr. Wade-Evans (*Life of S. David*, pp. 98—100) thinks that "there can be no doubt that the *Life of S. Cybi*, which makes Gereint the son of *Lud*, records the genuine pre-Conquest Cornish-Breton tradition. The 'Gereint ab Erbin' of Welsh writers is therefore a 12th century mistake. . . . . It follows from this that the pedigrees should read:

(1) Kyby m. (*mab* = son of) Selyv m. Erbin m. Gereint (m. Lud).
(2) Custennyn Gorneu m. Erbin m. Gereint (m. Lud).
(3) Yestin m. Erbin.

Iestin, Selyv, Constantine and Cyngar, he concludes, were all brothers, sons of Erbin, the son of Gereint." Cornish topography, as we shall see, provides independent proof of there being some real foundation for these traditions in the early history of Cornwall.

King Gereint became at last a prominent figure, not only of Welsh Hagiography, but of Welsh Romance. In the *Mabinogion*[5] there is a long story about "Geraint the son of Erbin." It clearly depends on the same traditions as those utilized by the authors of the *Life of S. Cybi* and the *Pedigrees of the Saints*,[6] but it has been elaborated and transformed by a writer of the school of

[5] pp. 219—262 in the edition in *Everyman's Library* (Dent).

[6] "Ambassadors from Cornwall" representing "Erbin the son of Custennin" appear at Caerleon. Kai, the founder of Landegé ("Old Kea") near Truro, has also become a knight of Arthur's court.

Geoffrey of Monmouth. Geraint now appears as a knight at King Arthur's Court at Caerleon, and Tennyson has simply versified the Mabinogion story in his poems on "The Marriage of Geraint" and "Geraint and Enid" in the *Idylls of the King*, in which he describes his hero as:

"The brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great order of the Table Round."

A Welsh bard of the Llywarch Hen school of poetry wrote an elegy on Geraint:

"At Llongborth was Geraint slain,
A valiant warrior from the woodlands of Devon."*

Yet another Welsh tradition about Gereint is found in Triad 25, Series ii (Y Cymmrodor VII. 127):—"Three men with navies of Ynys Prydain, Gereint son of Erbin, March son of Meirchion, and Gwenwynwyn son of Naw." Rhys (*Celtic Folklore*, p. 435) says that March is the Celtic *Cynfor*, who is also Cynin, or at least has a brother called Cynin.

II.

Brittany, too, had once its legend of Geren, King of Cornwall. In the 15th century there was a Chapel of Saint *Geran* in the cathedral of Dol, but no one could account for this fact till in 1912 the late M. l'abbé Duine discovered in the Public Library of Clermont in Auvergne a lost *Life of Saint Turiau* or *Turian*, Bishop of Dol.[7] This manuscript is a 13th century copy of a *Vita Turiavi* which must have been originally composed at Dol in the second half of the 9th century. The forms of the personal names and place-names it contains are very archaic, and it shows every sign of an early date. It contains a great deal of material not found in any other *Life* of the saint.[8] Unfortunately it is not the work of a contemporary, and though it was written less than 200 years after the time of S. Turian it is really little more than a collection of legends and local traditions about him. But several of these legends are of considerable interest, in view of the early date of the document. Two of them deal with Cornish saints, and therefore concern us very greatly.

* Printed by Skene, *Anc. B.* I. 266, II. 37.

[7] He printed it, with commentary, in the *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, T.XLI., 1912, pp. 1—48.

[8] All the information we possessed about S. Turian before 1912 came from a Paris *Vita*. Duine has printed an analysis of the two *Lives* side by side. They have comparatively little in common.

In c. 5, the saint raises to life, near a Church of S. Peter which he was building near the River *Ulda* (Oust), a virgin named Meldoch. King *Gradalon* invites her to relate what she has seen in the other world, and she tells him that she had beheld the place prepared for him in hell which he would have occupied if he had not been converted, "and a place destined for him in the kingdom of God, close to Constantine, a king [of the land] beyond the sea, the son of Peternus, of Cornwall.[9] If thou doest as he has done, thou mayest have a part in the kingdom of God."

Further on, in c. 9, we read: "Now it came to pass that a certain friend of his, named *Geren*, whom he had beyond the sea, who rested after a spiritual manner in his love (*qui in eius spiritaliter requiescebat visceribus*) had departed this life, and when the blessed Turiavus was, with the clergy and people, carrying crosses [in a procession], the saint lifted his eyes and saw his soul being borne by angels, who were surrounded by malignant spirits. Calling for silence, he said: 'Pray, all of you, to the Lord for my friend, because I see him being borne by angels, and enemies following him.' And when they had all prayed, as Turiavus the man of God [had commanded], the demons were driven away from that soul. Then they launched a raft [*or*, vessel] in the sea, with the aid of sailors, to find out the truth about the miracle, and in the middle of the sea they met men who brought the news of the death of the friend of the man of God."

Now it is clear, I think, that we have here the origin of the similar story which we read in the *Life of S. Teilo*. The form of the name, *Geren*, latinized by Geoffrey Stephen as *Gerennius*, is precisely the same in both documents, and seems to be found nowhere else. The meeting of the two ships in mid-Channel is related in almost exactly the same words in the *Life of S. Teilo* and the *Life of S. Turiau*. The compiler of the *Book of Llandaff* was obviously specially interested in Dol. He inserts a short Life of S. Samson before the *Life of S. Teilo*, and the latter (in which, by the way, he quotes the original *Vita Samsonis*) could only have been written by someone who had lived at Dol. There he must have seen the *Vita Turiavi*. He has taken from it the incident of the death of King Geren, and skilfully adapted it for his Life of S. Teilo. In the *Vita Turiavi* it is just a scrappy anecdote, badly introduced and badly written. In the *Vita Sancti Teliavi* it is artistically worked up into a coherent and attractive story. The phrase *qui in eius spiritaliter requiescebat visceribus* is developed into an account of the relations between King Gerennius and his confessor S. Teilo. Thus, to our disappointment, the delightful story of King Gerennius and S. Teilo threatens to disappear into the realm of fancies and fictions. And this may perhaps explain why we cannot find the name *Dingerein* in the parish of Gerrans, or anywhere else in Cornwall. Probably it was never there until Dr. Whitaker decided to call an earthwork in Gerrans by that name in 1804.[10] Apparently the only genuine Dingeraint is in Wales,—it is the old name of the town of Cardigan.[11]

King Geren, however, remains as a real figure in Cornish History, although he may not have had anything to do with S. Teilo. When the author of the *Vita Turiavi* wrote, about the year 850, there were stories current in Brittany about the conversion of S. Constantine (a Cornish saint who has *not* any cult in Brittany) and about a Cornish King Geren, who was connected with S. Turiau Bishop of Dol. Exactly what the connection was he has not told us, and perhaps did not know, but the existence of well-founded traditions about both these Cornish Kings in Brittany at a very early date is, thanks to M. Duine's discovery, undeniable.[12]

III.

Let us now look at the Cornish traditions about King Gerent.

[9] *Constantinum, regem ultra marinum, filium Peterni in de corvio* (a blunder for *de Coruio=Cornovio*). S. Patern is still called *San Pedern* in the Morbihan, as M. Loth points out. Here, by the way, we have the explanation of the statement in the Aberdeen Breviary which up to now has always appeared unaccountable, that "Constantine, *son of Paternus* king of *Cornwall*, married the daughter of the king of *Lesser Britain*." The name of S. Turiau appears in the Martyrology of Aberdeen. Some clerk of Aberdeen must have read the *Vita Turiavi*.

[10] See p. 18.

[11] There is a *Cilgerran* on the Pembrokeshire bank of the River Teifi, a few miles above Cardigan. It is possible that the author of the *Life of S. Teilo* was "improving on" an older *Life* of the saint, which contained a story of his relations with a *Welsh* King Geraint, living on the Teifi. Having read the *Life of S. Turiau*, and perhaps visited Gerrans, he made the Welsh king into a Cornish one.

[12] There is a parish of *Saint Gerand* between Pontivy and Loudéac, but in 1406 the name was written Saint *Gelan*, and is still pronounced *San Jelan*.

In searching for information about a local saint, it is no use for us to look for it in the parish called after him, but in the library of the cathedral of the diocese in which it lies, or in that of the monastery to which it belonged.

The very valuable manuscript Martyrology (? 11th or 12th century) preserved in the Cathedral Library at Exeter[13] contains the following entry under 1st May:

"In Ireland [the commemoration] of Saint Berriona, Virgin, by whose merits the son of King Gerentius was cured of the disease of paralysis."[14]

Now this "King Gerentius" must be the same as the "Saint Gerontius" who is invoked in the Exeter Litany. This Litany is found in a manuscript of Exeter origin now in the British Museum (Harl. MS. 863), and has been printed by the Henry Bradshaw Society at the end of the *Leofric Collectar* (see facsimile XVI.) It was probably drawn up by Bishop Leofric shortly before the Norman Conquest. In this Litany, which was intended to be used during the long Rogation Procession, 310 Saints are invoked. Only a small number of them (about 12) are Celtic Saints. In the middle of the list of Confessors comes a little group of four Saints honoured in Cornwall:

SANCTE PETROCE
SANCTE GERONTI
SANCTE KYERANE
SANCTE CADOCE.

Now I have shown in No. 39 of this series that four of the Cornish Saints invoked owe their place in this Litany to their Churches being on Episcopal manors. It is well-known that at this period Lords of Manors used to move from manor to manor with their retinue, as the farm produce stored up in each was exhausted—even kings did this, as the story of King Ina reminds us. It was no doubt while Bishop Leofric was staying at his manor-house at Tregeare in Gerrans that he found Gerontius spoken of as a Saint, and also heard the story about his son being healed by the prayers of S. Berrion. The form of the name in the Litany is identical with the low-Latin form found on the Continent (see *Gerontius* in Holder's *Alt-Celtische Sprachschatz*). In any case, this is the only proof earlier than the 13th century of

[13] Chapter MSS. 3518.

[14] "In hibernia sce. berrione uirginis cuius meritis filius regis gerentii a paralisis mo[rbo] curatus est."

Gerent being regarded as a Saint. But in 1294 we find, in the Taxation of Pope Nicholas, *Ecclesia de Sancto Gerendo*, and *Seynt Gerent* in 1360.*

The Cornish tradition about S. Gerent is thus very slight. It is practically confined to a single sentence in the Exeter Martyrology. But that sentence, short as it is, gives us a most precious piece of information, which provides a clue that will, when combined with the study of the place-names of West Cornwall, lead us to most important results.

It is true that the place-names of Gerrans parish are a little disappointing from our point of view at this moment. They show us, indeed, that the Church was called "Saint Gerendus" in the 13th century, but we cannot find the name *Dingerein*, or any other name that reminds us of the legends of the sainted King.

But the place-names of the adjacent parishes, when we set them side by side with those of three of the parishes of West Penwith, are most illuminating.

In the little parish of S. Antony in Roseland, south of Gerrans, is a headland called *Killagerran*, which seems to mean "The cell or monastery of Gerent." In a map of 1597 it is called *St. Girrian's Rock*. It lies between "St. Antonie Rock" and "Behordo Sand." East of the parish of Gerrans lies that of *Veryan*, and immediately to the N.E. of Veryan we find *St. Cuby*. The reader will remember that the *Life* of S. Cuby tells us that he was the great-grandson of Gereint (see p. 6). West of Gerrans is the parish of St. Just-in-Roseland, and in Goran parish we find Por(th)eest, now Goran Haven, with a chapel dedicated to S. Just. S. Just is most probably the *Yestin* who appears as a grandson of Gereint in the Welsh genealogies.[15] Beyond the Fal, on the Helford River, is the parish of Constantine, whom the same genealogies describe as another grandson of Gereint. Turning to West Penwith we find a second parish of St. Just, a parish of St. Levan (properly St. Selevan), and

* S. Gerent's name is not found in any kalendar, either here or in Brittany or in Wales. But Gerrans Feast is on the 2nd Sunday in August, and Dr. Whittaker says that c. 1800 it was the Sunday nearest 10th August.

[15] Iestin=Justinian, and Leland calls St. Just-in-Penwith "S. Just alias Justinian." Iestyn is the eponym of Plestin in Brittany, and Albert Le Grand has a folk-tale about him (pp. 586, 7 in the 1901 ed.)

the parish of St. Buryan. S. Selevan is probably the *Selyv* who appears as the father of S. Cuby in the latter's *Life*. Buryan, properly Berrian (*Ecglosberria* 1085, *St. Berian* 1233, *Sancta Beriana* 1316), contained in the 10th century a place called *Pelvagerens*, and is of course dedicated to the *Saint Berriona, Virgin*, whom we have found in the Exeter Martyrology as the Saint by whose prayers the son of King Gerentius was healed. Veryan near Gerrans must be dedicated to the same Saint. It is true that since the 13th century the patron of Veryan has been S. Symphorian, and the late Mr. Charles Henderson thought that the resemblance between the two names *Veryan* and *Berian* was purely accidental. But this was before the manuscript martyrology at Exeter had been properly examined (the version printed in the Henry Bradshaw Society's series was from a different manuscript, which omitted the entry about S. Berriona). It is now, I think, impossible to doubt that the patron of these two parishes is the same person. *Veryan* is only a mutation for *Berian*. The Glebe lands of Buryan are called in a 15th century charter *Eglosveryan*. In the parish of *Berrien* in Brittany the Holy Well is called *Founteun-Verien*, and a little to the East, in the parish of Poullaouen, is a place called *Lan-verrien*, spelt *Beryan* in the Quimper Cartulary of 1468. Moreover, in an inventory of 1281, the earliest date in which the dedication of Veryan to S. Symphorian is found, a "little bell of S. Symphorian" is mentioned (*campanicula Sancti Symphoriani*). This bell must have belonged to some local Celtic Saint, not to the Second Century martyr of Autun. As I have said in my book on S. Symphorian, "there must have been a church in this large district in Celtic times, founded by a Saint whose bell was treasured there centuries afterwards. His (or her) name sounded like *Symphorian* to the monks from the Cluniac monastery of Montacute, to whom the parish of Veryan had been given (Cluny is in Burgundy, near Autun), and they called both the bell and the parish after the well-known Burgundian Saint.[16]"

The study of Cornish Topography has thus given us most valuable confirmation of the Church traditions, Welsh, Cornish and Breton, about King Gerent, which we have been examining. Some measure of truth must lie behind these legends and traditions, which

[16] No. 27 in this series. *Gerent* or *Gerens* may have been a not uncommon name in Cornwall in early times. Rosurrance in St. Columb Major was *Rosgerens* in 1327 and 1346, and *Resgeryns* in 1431. It must be a purely secular name (The Heath or Ford of Gerens). There is another Rosurrance in St. Enoder.

are mostly independent of each other, and which are so well supported by what a great French scholar (M. Largillière) called "documents whose sincerity cannot be disputed"—ancient place-names. There seems then to be good reason for believing that the parish of Gerrans contains the site of a residence of a former King of Cornwall,[17] who made a great impression on his contemporaries, since numerous stories were told about him, long after his death, not only in Cornwall, but also in Wales and Brittany.

It remains to see if it is possible to say at what period this King Gerent lived.

Some time before the year 705 Aldhelm, Abbot of Malmesbury, wrote his famous letter to a King of Domnonia bearing a name which he spells *Geruntius*, urging him and his clergy to abandon the peculiar usages of the Celtic Church. He addresses him in rather vague terms as "the most glorious Lord wielding the sceptre of the Western Kingdom, King Geruntius," but his clergy are described as "all the priests of God dwelling throughout Domnonia." Bede tells us that the result of this letter was that Aldhelm "persuaded many of them [the Britons], who were subject to the West Saxons, to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Resurrection," though we know as a matter of fact that many of the Cornish were still recalcitrant over 100 years later, for King Egbert granted the estates of Polltun (Pawton), Caellwic (Kelly in Egloshayle) and Lanwithan (Lawhitton) to the Saxon Bishop of Sherborne that "from them he might year by year visit the Cornish people in order to extirpate their errors. For in time past they resisted the truth, as much as they might." This King Geruntius is probably the Gereint who, as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us, fought with Ina King of Wessex in 710, the year after Aldhelm's death. We are not told where his capital was, but he may well have resided in Cornwall. Aldhelm speaks in his *Carmina rythmica*, in not very flattering terms, of a visit he paid to *Cornwall* as well as Devon (it is the first instance of the use of the name *Cornubia*)—he speaks of passing through "dreadful Devon and cheerless Cornwall."[18]

[17] The situation of Gerrans closely resembles that of Castle Dore near Fowey, which we now know to have been the residence of Mark, "King of Cornwall."

[18] "Quando profectus fueram
Usque diram Domnoniam
Per carentem Cornubiam
Florentibus cespitibus
Et foecundis graminibus."

Can this Geruntius be our Saint Gerent? Duine is inclined to think he is,[13] and if we could accept every statement in the *Life of S. Turiau* as serious history the identification would fit in very well with the story of the saint of Dol and his friend King Geren, for S. Turiau seems to have lived about the same time as Aldhelm (c. 700). The passage about King Gerennius in the *Life of S. Teilo*, a Saint of the 6th century, is no argument against this identification, for it is, as we have seen, largely an imitation of the story in the *Vita Turiavi*. But there are difficulties in accepting this view. The reference in the latter *Life* to King Geren is too vague for much argument to be built upon it (it represents Constantine, the grandson of Geraint, as a heroic figure of the past while Geren was still alive), and the identification would involve some serious consequences. It would mean that the eponym of Buryan in Cornwall and Berrien in Brittany, together with S. Cuby and several other Cornish Saints, must have lived as late as the year 700, which does not seem likely, and that a very large number of places in the Hundreds of Powder and Penwith received their names less than 100 years before Cornwall was conquered by the Saxons, for S. Constantine, S. Just and S. Selevan seem to be grand-sons of Geraint, and S. Cuby his great grand-son. It would appear probable that the toponymy of Cornwall in its main outlines was complete before the 8th century. Gereint was no doubt, like Constantine, a common name in the royal house of Dumnonia, and the eponym of Gerrans may have been a King Gerent who lived in the 6th century.

The problem of the date of King Gerent is not easy of solution in the present state of our knowledge of the subject, but our study of the traditions about him scattered in various ancient sources has cleared the ground of several mistakes which have misled us in the past, and has shown us some very interesting facts about the early history of West Cornwall and Mid Cornwall which may lead to fresh discoveries.

[13] *Memento*, No. 97. He thought that all the stories about King Gerent may have had their origin in the imaginations of clerks who had read Aldhelm's Letter. But if he had known the statement in the *manuscript* Martyrology of Exeter (he only quotes the *printed* edition of this important document), and the facts about the double set of Cornish place-names which confirm it in such a remarkable way, he would, I am sure, have been more cautious. Fr. Grosjean, on the other hand, thinks "that there may have been a Saint Gerontius, whom later hagiographical writers have arbitrarily made into a King. . . . . A King, known to them from literary sources, has replaced a local saint of the usual type." (cf. p. 1, note 1.)

NOTE ON THE NAME *GERENT*.

By Professor Max Förster, of the University of Munich.

There is no doubt that *Gerontius*, *Geruntius*, *Gerent*, *Gereint*, *Geraint*, *Gerendus*, *Geren* and *Gerrennius* are different forms of one and the same name. The oldest form is *Gerontius*, as appears in its Greek form GERONTIOU MAREOU on an ancient inscription in Asia Minor, whither it must have been imported by the Celtic Galatians. It is a Celtic name (though difficult to explain), as there is no name like it either in Greek or Latin. Bede (*Eccl. Hist.*, I. 11) mentions a British general named Count *Gerontius* who died c. 411 A.D. Then there is the Cornish king, who lived at the beginning of the 8th cent., who is called by Aldhelm in his famous letter *Geruntius*, but in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is called *Gerent*. (In Old English there was no *o* possible before an *n* or *m*; therefore Aldhelm anglicized the British *Gerontius* into *Geruntius*, just as the Anglo-Saxons made a Latin *pondo* into O.E. *pund*= 'pound,' low Latin *monacus* into *munuc*, etc.) Aldhelm's *Geruntius* is certainly the same king as the *Gerent, Weala cyning, i.e.* King of the Cornwall Wealas or Cornish, who is mentioned in a 12th cent. addition to the Parker Chronicle and in the later MSS. of the Saxon Chronicle under the year 710. *Gerent* is the later Cornish form of the British name *Gerontius*. *Geraint* is the modern Welsh form, Middle Welsh *ei* always becoming Modern Welsh *ai*.

An Old British *Gerontius* would be subject to *i*-affection both in Cornish and in Welsh. This would show itself in two forms: *Gereint* and *Gerent*. In both cases the *i* has changed the preceding *o* to *e*, as is the rule in Cornish. This process was not at work earlier than the 8th century. So Aldhelm still heard the form Gerontius, and this form appears in the Litany of the Leofric Psalter (see p. 10.) The *Gerentius* of the Exeter Martyrology is a latinization of *Gerent*, which again is only a later form of *Gerontius*, so that there is no doubt that the *S. Gerontius* of the Litany is the same person as the *Rex Gerentius* of the Martyrology.

About 1050-1150 final *t* in Old Cornish was changed into *s* (*e.g. nant* becomes *nans*), and so we get a new form of our name in Old Cornish *Gerens*, which has come down to us in the modern

name of the parish of *Gerrans* (the *a* is only a late English spelling for an obscured, unaccented *e*). As a Cornish christian name *Gerance* occurs in the parish register of Constantine between 1570 and 1750 (see Henderson, *History of Constantine* p. 215, and pp. 21 and 22 of this book.) The Breton forms *St. Gerran* and *St. Gerand* show French spellings of the French pronunciation of *en*.

Old British *nt* came to be retained only when in *final* position. In the middle of a word, between vowels, it was early assimilated to *nn*. Hence the 12th cent. *Gerennius* of the Book of Llandaff as the name of the Cornish King. Such forms with *nn* may have given rise to *Geren* and *Gerein* (in *Dingerein* and *Merthir Gerein*).

Gerent was certainly not a very usual name in either Cornwall or Wales. It is remarkable that among the many hundreds of names appearing in the *Liber Landavensis*, the Brut, Geoffrey of Monmouth, etc. we can find no other person of this name besides the British general, the Cornish king, and the fictitious knight of the Arthurian saga.

HISTORY OF THE PARISH OF GERRANS.

CHAPTER I.

Origin and early History of the Parish.

We have seen that the Church and Parish of Gerrans take their name from a Saint Gerent, Gerens, or Gerendus, and that there seems to be reason for believing that this saint was a King of Cornwall who had a residence here. We will now endeavour to trace the history of the Parish.

The written history of Gerrans begins, as usual, with Domesday Book. But first it is necessary to examine two assertions that have been made about places said to have been in Gerrans Parish, which, if true, would be most interesting links uniting the mediæval Parish of Gerrans with the Gerrans of ancient legend.

It has been asserted, firstly, that there is a place in the Parish still called Dingerein and the reader, looking at modern maps of Cornwall, (including the Ordnance Survey Map) will find "Dingerein Castle" marked as lying close to the main road from Gerrans to Tregoney. He will also find in many guide books some such statement as the following:—"looking over Gerrans Bay is Carn Beacon, 370 feet in circumference, supposed to be the burial place, in A.D. 600, of King Gerennius, whose body was carried across the bay in a boat of gold propelled by silver oars."

Secondly, it has been suggested that the *Dingerein* of the "Life of Saint Teilo" is the same place as the "monastery of Dinnurin" (or, "Dinnurin"*), in which lived the Bishop Kenstec who made his submission to Ceolnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury (833–870).† If this were true, it would show that the ancient residence of the kings of Cornwall had, by the 9th century, become the site of a Celtic monastery bishopric, the third which History shows to have existed in Cornwall.

* Birch, *Cart. Sax.* No. 527.

† "Ego Kenstec . . . ad episcopalem sedem in gente Cornubia in monasterio quod lingua Brettonum appellatur Dinnurin electus." see Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, I. 675.

Unfortunately both these statements (especially the first) rest on very shaky foundations. It is true that the author of the "Life of S. Teilo" tells us that the residence of King Gerennius in Cornwall was called *Dingerein* (see p. 5). But we have seen how little trust can be placed in this late and tendentious document, and examination shows that there is no evidence that any place in Gerrans Parish was called Dingerein till about 140 years ago. "The large entrenchment marked as 'Dingerein' in the Ordnance Survey Map near Cargurrel," says Mr. Henderson, "never bore the name until Dr. Whitaker bestowed it in the 18th century." Dr. Whitaker, the well known antiquary Rector of Ruan Lanihorne at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, to whom we owe a great debt for having been the first in modern times to revive interest in the Cornish saints and the early Church history of Cornwall, but who lived before the study of documents and the growth of a critical spirit had made it possible to study Cornish history properly, is also (though unconsciously) the original source of the modern story about King Gerennius having been buried at Carne Beacon. He thought of excavating the barrow on the cliff here, which is one of the largest in England. In his book *The Ancient Cathedral of Cornwall* (I. 302) he writes: "Tradition talks of a *boat* entering the barrow, to be *there buried* with its *oars of silver* and its *sides of gold*. The traditionary tale is so deeply stamped upon the popular imagination that, on a reported design in me to explore the interiors of the barrow lately, the farm servants began to request their masters for a holiday, in order to see this buried boat unearthed." No such boat was ever found, and the reader will observe that Dr. Whitaker does not say that King Gereint was buried in it—this is a later addition to the story. Mr. Henderson demolished the sham legend of "Dingerein Castle," but, relying on the *Vita Teliavi*, he thought that it was a genuine, but lost, Cornish place-name. "If we are to place in this parish," he wrote, "the Dingerein mentioned in the Life of St. Teilo, we must locate it at Tregeare." There is no decisive evidence, however, that any place in Cornwall was ever really called Dingerein. The true Dingereint, as we have seen, is the town of Cardigan. (*Brut*, 289.)

In the same way there is no proof that the Monastery of Dinuurin (though it certainly was in Cornwall) was in the Parish of Gerrans. True, Dr. Stubbs, the great historian, thought that Dinurrin was "possibly, Dingerein, the city of King Gerein, now Gerrans," and Mr. Henderson considered that Dingerein was

"undoubtedly the same place as the Cornish monastery of Dinurrin. No place in Cornwall now bears this name, unless it be Castle Teen-Urne, near Helston, but the writer is almost convinced that it is to be identified with Tregear in this Parish. The Bishops of Exeter are known to have succeeded to the estates of various Celtic monasteries, and before 1066 Tregear was the capital of an important episcopal fief."[2] In spite of these great authorities, however, it is by no means certain that Dinurrin *is* the same name as Dingerein. From the philological point of view there are difficulties in the way. And supposing that Dinurrin was in Gerrans, and was a later form of Dingerein, why should the name of Gerent or Gerein have become changed into "urrin" by the 9th century, while as the name of the Church and Parish it remained in the same place unchanged all through the Middle Ages? The identification of Dinurrin or Dinuurin with Dingerein rests entirely on the supposition that there *was* originally such a place as Dingerein in Cornwall: if this cannot be proved (and we have seen it is very doubtful), we must look for some other explanation of "urrin." There seems to be a good case for the alternative identification of Dinurrin with Castle Teen-Urne in Wendron. The name is practically identical. *Din* was pronounced "Deen" in old Cornish,—*Treen* in St. Levan was originally "*Tre-din*." Polsue says (*Parochial History of Cornwall*, IV. 312) "there was an ancient encampment at Lower Town, called Castle-teen-herne, to which a right of turbary, etc., over a large tract of adjoining lands, is said to belong." Unfortunately he does not give his authority.[3] On the other hand, there is no tradition of any Church or monastery at Lower Town. The earthwork called Castle Teen Urne, in a very strong position at the head of what was once a tidal estuary, is a very small one, partially excavated with disappointing results in 1936, and there are no ecclesiastical remains of any sort. There is indeed a fine Celtic cross in the garden of Trenethick hall a mile away, but no one seems to know where it came from. We all naturally want very much to find the site of the ancient Celtic monastery-bishopric of Dinurrin, but at present I feel it is impossible

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[2] *Cornish Church Guide*, p. 100.

[3] In a Rentroll of Lands in Cornwall belonging to Arthur Holdsworth Esqre, now in my possession, I find the two tenants of *Castle-teen-herne* paying £1/3/4 annually in 1778 and following years. Prof. Max Förster suggests another derivation,—from *tin* (= "bottom") and *hern* (= "iron.")

to do more than guess where it was situated, whether at Tregear in Gerrans, at Castle Teen Urne in Wendron, or somewhere else in Cornwall.[1]

It is not until the 11th century that the historian of Gerrans begins to find himself on firm ground. Domesday (1085) states that "The Bishop has 1 manor which is called TREGEL, which Bishop Lewric held T.R.E. [in the time of King Edward]. Therein are 12 hides. These rendered geld for 2 hides T.R.E. Sixty teams can plough these. Of these the Bishop has half a hide in demesne and 2 ploughs, and the villeins have 11½ hides and 16 ploughs, and the Bishop has there 18 villeins and 12 bordars and 6 serfs, and 40 sheep, and of woodland 1 league in length and half a league in breadth, and of pasture half a league in length and the same in breadth. And it renders 8*li.* yearly, and when the Bishop received it it was worth 100*s.*" This *Tregel* is Tregeare, now a farm about two miles north of the churchtown of Gerrans, and for many centuries the secular side of the life of Gerrans people centred in the manor house there, as the religious side centred in the Church of Saint Gerens. Since the Bishop was both lord of the manor and patron of the advowson of the Church the two were closely united.

The name *Tregear* (*Tregaer* 1260, Tregayr 1392, 1416—these forms show the ancient pronunciation), which means "the village of the Camp," indicates that there was once an earthwork here, perhaps the castle of King Gerent, but no traces of it, nor even any tradition of its existence, remain. The farmhouse itself has hardly any ancient features. Only the beautiful and extensive view from the hill on which it stands, embracing Gerrans Church, with its spire, the hills and valleys of St. Just, and the basin of the Fal, make a visit worth while. Yet once this was an important place. During the Middle Ages the Bishops of Exeter frequently visited it when they came to Cornwall. It had a Chapel dedicated to the Holy Cross. On 14th September 1263, we read in Bishop Bronescombe's Register, the Bishop "consecrated the altar of the Chapel of Tregaer in honour of the Holy Cross." We find that the first of the two yearly courts leet of Tregaer in 1307 was being held "in Festo Sancte Crucis." The Bishops ceased to visit their manors after 1450 and Tregear became the Barton farm, and the Chapel was eventually desecrated. No traces of it remain. It is curious, remarks Mr. Henderson, that there should be no carved stones existing of a structure which was probably, like the other episcopal Chapels, of some architectural merit.

In 1392 the Manor of *Tregayr* was worth £36/7/9½. The Reeve's Roll for that year contains the following entries:

"*Valor maneriorum et burgorum episcopi Exon.*

Tregayr. The Manor there is worth this year £36/7/9½.

Book of forfeitures.	In the book of the Reeve of Cargaul, for the price of sheep sold by him, 41*s.*
Book of pence.	In the book of Thomas Stayndrop received for tallage £69/5/1.
	Whence deduct arrrears for the preceding year £44/9/1.
	In the book of the same Thomas Stayndrop, auditor of his account, tallage 109/4, whence deduct arrears from the preceding year 54*s.*
Arrears.	John Fornays, Reeve, owes for the 21st year [of the reign] of his arrears 21½*s.*
	Gerendus Tregasse, Reeve, owes for the 22nd year, of his arrears 60/2½.
	Henry Gyllou, Reeve, owes for this year for his arrears £12/19/8½."

Tallage was a tax levied on tenants of the manor for the lord. We note that the name of the patron saint *Gerendus* was a favourite Christian name in the Parish. (In 1550 a priest named Sir *Gerence* John was collated to the vicarage of St. Feocus.) The Court Rolls of *Tregayr*, 1416—1506, preserved in the Cathedral Archives at Exeter, are full of interesting details about the economic life of the period, such as the accounts for the rebuilding of the Manor Mill, the paying of Rents in kind, etc.

The lands of the Manor of Tregear (as we learn from a Rental of 1538) included the whole of what is now the Parish of Gerrans, all St. Antony, and all St. Just and part of Philleigh (it thus contained

[1] Mr. Wade-Evans points out that St. Just is associated with St. Gwrin (=Goran) at Llanwrin, while Constantine, Iestin and Cybi are all found in South Pembrokeshire and Cardigan. He suggests that *Dinurrin* might possibly be derived from *Dinurin*="The Fort of Gwrin or Goran." (See "The Parish of Goran" by G. H. D. and C. G. H.) Now the *Vita Petroci* tells us that *Uuron* (*Wronus* in the Gotha MS) abandoned his *cella* at Bodmin to S. Petroc ("S. Guron's well" is in the churchyard at Bodmin). Can Dinurrin be the original name for the town of Bodmin, as Lanwethinoc was the original name for Padstow and Dunhevet the original name of Launceston? This would explain Kenstec's words very satisfactorily.

the whole of the district of Roseland, except part of Philleigh, which formed the small manor of Eglosrose), the whole of the Parish of St. Michael Penkivel north of the Fal, part of Ruan Lanihorne, and a large part of the Parish of Feock west of the Fal. The demesne lands consisted of a long, narrow strip running from Tregassick in the south to Resores in the north, having the manor house at Tregear in the centre. There was also another long narrow strip of demesne land lying to the east, stretching from Trevean to Gonitor. Certain lands in the distant Parishes of Mevagissey, St. Keverne, St. Erth, St. Hilary, Breage and Sithney, paid "High Rents" to Tregear.

There was another huge episcopal manor embracing the Parishes of Budock, Mabe, St. Gluvias and Mylor, west of the Fal.

At some time very early in the Middle Ages—exactly *when* we do not know, part of the Manor of Tregear was made into a district paying tithe to the priest of Gerrans Church, and under his spiritual care, and so the Parish of Saint Gerens in Roseland[1] came into existence. Its boundaries are thus given in a document of the reign of James I.:

Bounds of Gerrans c. 1613. (MS. Dioc. Reg. at Launceston.) "The Parishe of Gerrans on the east part beginneth with Trewithian lane end, is bounded by the meane [=main] sea, and endeth betwene the lands of Resteage in Gerance and Porthe in Anthonye in Roseland, until it come to a creeke of the sea on the S. part of Trewynes land, and so from the east end of that creeke as the creeke goeth between Gerrens and St. Anthonye to a pointe of Trewynes Land where, or very near, is a seller, and northwards to a bridge called Trethinge bridge, near Trethime Myll, and from that bridge and so by the Ryver Northwards betweene Gerrans and St. Just, bounding the lands of Tregeare and Landehowse in St. Gerrance and the lands of Trewithian, and on the N. the sd. parish bounded with a small river which lieth between the sd. parish and Filly, which River leadeth untill it come verye neere unto a small bound or *Crosse stone* called *Penpirthe Crosse*, as the sd. Water leadeth between the lands called Ressawes, Carencay, Tregere Wone, Metherose and Treligaine, all in Gerrance, and Trelowse, Polglase, Trewothall and Treworlas, all in Fillye, and from the sd. *Crosse*

[1] The name *Roseland* (*Roselande* 1259) comes from the Cornish *rus*, meaning a promontory, which is found in many Cornish place-names (such as *Penrose*) and in the name of the great Breton Abbey of St. Gildas-de-Rhuys.

called Penpirth Crosse it farther leadeth and is bounded with the parish of Fillye on the N., *viz.* with the King's High Way untill the sd. meane sea, and which high way leadeth betweene the lands of Treligane and Penperth in Philly."

We learn from this document that an ancient stone cross once stood at the head of Pendower Lane, where it joins the highroad from Gerrans to Tregony. Another cross must have stood at Treluggan, where a field called *Park-an-Crowse* (="The field of the Cross") is mentioned in 1690 and 1841. There is only one ancient cross in the Parish now,—the fine Celtic Churchyard cross (see p. 46).

Besides the Chapel of the Holy Cross at Tregear, there was a Chapel of Our Lady at Rosteage in 1401, and the evidence of place-names shows that Chapels existed in the Middle Ages at Trewithian and Treluggan. The name *Nampitty* (*Nanspeyti* 1322), as Mr. Morton Nance shows (see p. 41), proves that there was once a hospice or hospital in the Churchtown.

Rosteage has been the principal place in the Parish since the 17th century. A Trewithian deed of 1365 mentions a John *Restack* who undoubtedly lived at Rosteage as yeoman proprietor. His father, Ralph de Rosteak, is mentioned in a lawsuit about Tregenna in Veryan, in 1363. In 1389 "John Petyt Resteak" was a juryman of the Hundred of Powder, clearly called "Resteak" because he lived there. In the 14th century Cornwall was full of small land-holders taking their names from their tenements. The Petits were an eminent Cornish family whose chief residence was at Predannack in Mullyon. In 1401 (6th May) John Petyt and Margaret his wife had Licence to celebrate Divine Service in their Chapels of S. Mary the Virgin in their mansions of *Predennek*, *Rostek*, and *Myllynse* (Molingy in St. Austell); and on 6th Nov., 1433 Margaret *Pedet*, John Pedet of Predannek, and Joan his wife and their children had licence for chapels in their mansions of Predanek, Ardeveres (in Philleigh) and *Rystek*. The Petits seem to have died out at the beginning of the 16th century. In 1547 John *Rostek* appears in the Subsidy Roll as the richest man in the Parish. He was probably the "John Jennen alias Rostege" who is mentioned in the Register as being buried on 9 Feb. 1563. Rosteage afterwards passed through the families of Coryn, Coffin, Mohun, Kemp and Harris. The present house at Rosteage is no older than the 16th century, but it contains an arched doorway of Pentewan stone that

may have come from its predecessor. The field in front, called "Castle Field," is perhaps the site of the old house. In the valley below is a picturesque well, with a building over it, and a granite arch, which is called "Nun's Well," but this, Mr. Henderson says, seems to be something of a modern fake, for the stone arch was brought from the front door of the house (it is of early 17th century date), while the building and the name are no older than the last century.

Close to Tregear is *Lanhoose*, which is occasionally found in documents as *Lan-rus?*="the Roseland Monastery" (but see p. 41). John *Lanhuse*, of London, by his will in 1465 gave to the Rector and Wardens of St. Gerrans a silver chalice gilded within.

Trewithian is an ancient hamlet with a picturesque "Green," 1½ miles north of the Church. In 1666 mention is made in a lease granted by Sir Peter Courtenay, Knight, to George Chymmoc of "a house called the Chapell and a small plot called the Chappelle-garden in the village of Trewithian in Gerrance."

CHAPTER II.

THE RECTORS OF GERRANS.

We have spoken of "the priest of Gerrans." The first parish priest whose name has come down to us was appointed in the middle of the 13th century. The Bishops of Exeter were greatly interested in the Priory of Plympton, which had been founded in 1121 by Bishop Warelwast. A few years later Bishop Robert I. (1138–1155) gave to the Priory the little Parish of St. Anthony in Roseland, and the monks built a grange or small cell there. One of the bishops must also have given them a share in the tithes of Gerrans, for in 1202 we find an agreement made at St. Gerrans between Bishop Henry Marshall and the Prior and Convent of Plympton, who had for some time held equal interests with the bishop in the rectory. It was decided that the cure of souls should be served by a chaplain collated by the bishop. He was to have the whole tithe of the episcopal demesnes (*i.e.* Tregear, etc.) and a moiety (half) of all the other tithes, and of the Altalage.[6] He was to take an oath before induction to pay all the residue, *viz.* the moiety of the Altalage, and of all tithes except those of the demesnes, to the Prior and Convent for their portion.[7] On 19 May, 1261, Bishop Bronescombe confirmed this arrangement. Thus were created the two "portions" in the Church,—the Rectory or *Porcio Curata* (this expression continued in use till c. 1360) and the *Prior's Portion*. In the Taxation of 1288 we find the *Ecclesia Sancti Gerendi* assessed as follows:—"Porcio Rectoris £2/6/8, Porcio Prioris Sancti Antonii in eadem £2/6/8."[7] To this day the Parish of Gerrans possesses two Rectors, *viz.* the Incumbent, and the lay tithe owner who has succeeded to the Prior's share.

In 1259 Bishop Bronescombe "commended the Church of Saint Gerendus in Cornwall to *Master Bartholomew de Lardario*," who was formally instituted on 3 October, 1260.

[6] *i.e.* fees, etc., due to, and offerings made in, the Church.

[7] In a list of the possessions of Plympton Priory in 1334 is the misleading entry "Ecclesia Sancti Antonini cum capella Sancte Gerende." *Capella* here = *Porcio*. C. G. H.

After him *Master Roland* held a "Portion" in the Church, and on his death,

Paganus, a Chaplain, was collated, on 10 August 1273. He resigned 6 Feb., 1274-5, and on the same day

John de Hanoke, Subdeacon, was collated to the same portion.

Sir Richard de Teyntone, priest, was collated to a portion in the Church 20 July, 1280. On 13 March 1284-5 the bishop granted to the Rector of the Church of Buringtone licence to exchange with Sir Richard, Rector of Saint Gerendus, for one year. Sir Richard died Rector of Gerrans while the See of Exeter was vacant, and the patronage fell to the King, who presented "to a portion in the Church"

Thomas de Cornubia (no doubt his name in the vulgar tongue was "Thomas Curnow") on 1 May, 1308. On his death,

Sir Richard de Brayleghe, Priest, was collated, on 30 Jan. 1309-10. He was instituted on 28 Apr., 1310, resigning the Deanery of Crantock at the same time.

Sir Henry de Trefeuwa, Priest, was collated 9 May, 1311. He exchanged on 1 Nov., 1311 with

Sir Henry de Pultone, Dean of Crantock, who was ordained Priest by the Bishop of Winchester at Kingston (Surrey) 23 Sept. 1312, and resigned 8 Dec., 1323, being instituted to North Tawton, and

Sir Adam de Tavistoke was collated more than a year later, 30 Dec., 1324. On 3 Aug., 1329 Bishop Grandisson, at Peyngtone, addressed the following letter "to our beloved son Adam de Tavystoke, Rector of the Church of S. Gerendus in Cornwall, presbiter of our diocese, greeting: We hereby grant you a special license, in order that you may be able to travel to the Roman Court, for the sake of making a Pilgrimage and of attending to your other affairs there, starting as soon as convenient after you receive this letter and remaining not later than the Feast of Christmas next, after which you are to return to the said Church of yours without further delay, and meanwhile you shall not be bound to residence there." On 1 Oct., 1333 this Rector had license for non-residence again, till the Feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross (3 May) 1334. On the death of "Sir Adam de Tavystoke, alias de Stapeldone,"

Sir William de Trebusy, Priest, was collated at Chudleigh on 17 July, 1349, to the "*Porcio curata* of the Parish Church of S. Gerendus."

Sir Guy Ayschwille, Priest, was collated to the same on 20th Sept., 1359, "in the presence of Messrs. Walter Pauntone, Roger of Inkepenne, Thomas Tuggel, Andrew of Fawy, clerk, and others.

Sir Andrew de Fawy, Clerk, was himself collated to the *Porcio curata* on 3rd March, 1361-2.

Sir John atte Hyl seems to have been the next Rector. He obtained license for non-residence for a year on 4th March, 1370-1, "at the instance of Thomas de Burtone, so that he attend the obsequies of William Teynturelle of the diocese of Salisbury." "Sir John atte Hyl of Blickling" exchanged with

Stephen Cavel, Rector of Nutshalling (Hants.), who was collated (in London) to the Church of S. Gerendus on 21st April, 1371.

In 1411 *John Fecos*, Rector of S. Gerendus, had license to celebrate Divine Service in the Manse of his Rectory.

Sir William Nelme. He exchanged (6 Feb., 1460) with

John Lawry, Rector of Langtre. John Lawry was one of the jury who appeared in the Church of St. Enoder on 20th Aug., 1464, and examined and reported on the state of the Church and Vicarage, the Vicar having brought an action against his predecessor for dilapidations.

Sir John Cok, on whose death,

Sir John Tyack, Chaplain, was instituted to St. *Gerens*, 25th Nov., 1515. On whose resignation (with a pension of £5/6/0),

Mr. Thomas Andrewe was collated to St. *Gerend*, on 22nd Oct., 1520. On 31 Dec., 1522, in the list of those compelled to contribute to "A lone of monye by the clergie unto the Kynge," we find the entry: "Andrew, Rector Sti. Gerendi, goods worth £11, possessions not exceeding £18, paid £1/10." On his death,

Sir Richard Depyng was collated by Bishop Veysey to Gerrans in 1528. On his death,

Sir Thomas Gybons, Clerk, was collated to Gerrans. On his death,

Thomas Yowinge, Priest, LL.B., was collated to St. *Gerend*, in 1536. In the Valuation of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall in 1537-8 we find the name of "Mr. Thomas Yownge, Rector, paid 3/6," and "Dominus Radulphus Dowte, paid 16d." under *Gerens*. On his resignation,

Henry Godfray was collated to the Church of S. Gerendus in Cornwall on 31 Dec., 1547. While he was Rector, the Church of England passed through the most momentous and most revolutionary period of her history. He saw the introduction of the English Prayer Book (which his parishioners, who were attached to the old Latin Services, resented) and the plunder of most of the ornaments of his Church under Edward VI. and Elizabeth, and the growth of Calvinistic doctrines under the latter. The two following entries speak for themselves:

(Church plate stolen by Edward VI. and restored by Queen Mary).

"GERANS. 3 chall[ices] and pat[ens] 19½ oz. / A crose of sylver and gilt of 108 oz. / A pix of sylver 4 oz. } 131½ oz. and R" = [Redelivered]

"Voluntary Contributions by the Clergie towardes the Relief of the Towne of Geneva beyonde the Seas, 23 March, 1582, Henry Godfrye." (Two entries in the Burial Register during this period seem to refer to assistant priests:

William Trehane, clarke, was buried 1570.

Sir Rafe Doute, clarke, was buried 1580).

"Henry Godfray, Parson" was buried 12 Oct., 1583.

Mr. Stephen Garth, Parson of Gerrans, was collated by Bishop Woolton in 1583. He was buried 12 March, 1608-9.

On 17 Oct., 1591, *John Trestean*, Clerke, is mentioned, his daughter being married on that day.

John Cole, Clerk, was collated to *St. Gerans* on 12th July 1609. and inducted 18th July, 1609.

John Dell, Clerk, M.A., was instituted 1st April, 1617. Patron—William Kyste, notary, by grant from Bishop William Cotton. (This Bishop frequently bargained away his patronage, as we find that in 1612 he granted the presentation to Lelant to James Dinham, gentleman). In 1617 Dell subscribed to the 39 articles in the presence of John Cole "clerk, preacher of the Word of God (*verbi Dei concionatori*)," —presumably his predecessor, of John Nicholson, Rector of St. Just, and Arthur Furze, Vicar of *Vyrrian*, who inducted him. Patron—the King (I cannot explain this discrepancy). He was buried 19 June, 1642.

Daniel Southmead was inducted 1641.

John Bedford was inducted 1645, buried 13 April, 1692.

Mr. Richard Fouller, Rector of S. Gerrans, buried 28 May, 1708.

John Trenhayle, 25th Sept., 1708, buried 8th Sept., 1724.

John Grant. (? 1726.)

John Wilcocks, M.A., 1728.

James Williams, 1730, buried 14 Aug., 1753.

William Williams, 1758—1769. The Registers are written in the fine bold hand of Wm. Bedford, Curate, till 23 July, 1769, and in the hand of William Cornish, Curate, 1769—22 June, 1791.

John Jope, 1785—1806.

William Baker, who had been Curate from July, 1781, became Rector, 1807, buried 21 March, 1844.

William David Longlands, inducted 1844, resigned Sept., 1861, died 1875.

Frederick Henry Scrivener, (the famous New Testament scholar), inst. 16 Oct., 1861, resigned 1 Apr., 1875. His edition of the New Testament appeared in 1858. He was one of the committee which prepared the 'Revised Version' of 1870, and on Jan. 3, 1872, was granted a civil list pension of £100 "in recognition of his services in connection with biblical criticism, and in aid of the publication of his works." He was made a Prebendary of Exeter in 1874, and died at Hendon (Middlesex) 30 Oct., 1891.

John Bartlett, B.A., late Vicar of Millbrook, collated by Frederick Temple, Bishop of Exeter, 30 Aug., 1876.

John Arundell Leakey, M.A., late Vicar of Topsham, collated by Dr. Benson, first Bishop of Truro, in 1880, having exchanged with Mr. Bartlett.

Charles Ernest Randle Cowan, B.A., late Vicar of Weston, Bath, exchanged with Mr. Leakey, collated 1889.

Herbert John Martin, late Rector of Kyre-Wyard, Tenbury, collated 1902, having exchanged with Mr. Cowan.

Archibald Harry Wood, B.A., instituted 1908.

Thomas Gwynne Davies, 1926.

Herbert Thomas Wright, formerly Missionary in Uganda, instituted Oct., 1936, died in Gerrans Church 10 Jan., 1937.

Harold Doudney, M.A., inst. 30 Apr., 1937.

GERRANS PARISH CHURCH
(from a sketch by Mr. F. E. Allen).

CHAPTER III.

OLD PARISH LIFE AT GERRANS.

We have seen in c. II. how much valuable information about the history of Gerrans has been preserved for us in the Registers of the Bishops of Exeter. There are many other records kept by the Church authorities, and stored in the archives of Exeter Cathedral, which give us interesting glimpses into the daily life of our Parishes in the years that are past, such as the accounts of the proceedings in the Consistory Courts of the diocese, and the Visitation Books of the Archdeacon of Cornwall. We are specially well supplied with information about those Parishes which belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, and also about those which were on episcopal manors and were called the Bishop's "Peculiars" because they lay, both in spiritual and temporal matters, under his direct jurisdiction. The latter was the case, as we have seen, with the Parish of Gerrans. The representatives of these Parishes had to attend at a court held from time to time by the Bishop's Official, and the minutes of what was done at the "Visitations of the Bishop's Peculiars" are frequently very valuable for the student of local history. The Rector and the jurors of the Parish had often to cross Falmouth harbour to attend the court at Penryn, which lay within another, and more important, peculiar of the Bishop.

In the Exeter Cathedral Archives are a series of folios beginning in 1602, containing a folio for each Peculiar, and at the end of a group of Peculiars are lists of the persons cited to appear for various offences. The "Official Peculiar" kept the Courts.

Thus in 1602 we find that Mr. Stephen Garth was Rector of St. Gerans, that Robert Hunt and Henry Roberts were "gard' jurat" (*i.e.* sworn keepers of the Court Rolls of the Manor), and John Bodrigye, John Drewe and John Parnell were "jurat" (=jurors). Then follow the wills proved during the year.

Here are some of the "Bishop's Peculiar Presentments."

1662. Gerrance. At the Visitation of Seth, Lord Bishop of Exon, held at Truro, Nov. 21.

Humphry Jennings and Stephen Resuggan, Churchwardens, stated

"We have no booke of homilyes, nor table for marriages, nor surplice for our minister. [They had disappeared during the Civil War.]

We present Rich. Silwood and his wife for absenting themselves from their parish church.

Jane, wife of Mr. Antho. Crewse, for the same. She is reputed to be a recusant.

John Bedford O[u]r minister—the Bishop patron. The Rectory yearly worth £70.

Joan Thomas and Honour Fittuck using the employment of midwives, but whether they have licens we know not."

1664. Ap. 28. Ferd. Hobbes, Geo. Clymow, Churchwardens, Edw. Hobbs and Robt. Chimmo, Overseers. In 1672 we find there were 440 persons in the Parish of Gerrans who "conformed" (to the religious settlement of 1662) and one nonconformist.

1674. Wm. Crewes and Ric. Jennings present two women for immoral conduct. They had evidently given serious scandal, and the zealous Rector says, "I John Bedford desire that these persons may be summoned to appear before my Lord Bishop at his visitation this summer, and not respited till the Visitation of the Peculiars the next year."

1679. Stephen John and Robert John, Churchwardens, state that "The roof of our church is ruinous, which shall be taken down and repaired with convenient speed, and some materials are already provided. The chancel joining to that roof is ruinous also."

1680. Edw. Hobbs and Stephen Bennet, C.W. report:
"We have made a great progress in the repairing of the church and chancel, being ruinous, and Masons, Carpenters and Helliers are employed in repairing them. We hope that through the help of God we may finish the repairing of them, and make them more strong and comely than, as we conceive, they were at the first building, before Aug. 1st next."

1681. Ed. Hobbs and Robt. Chimmow, Churchwardens, complain of "the want of convenient seats in our Church and Chancells suitable to the populousness of our Parish, for the making

of which we desire a license may be granted to us." They add, "We present Jane, wife of Anthony Crews, for a recusant; and the children of Richd. Silwood as being, so far as we know, as yet unbaptized."

Next year (1682) Edward Master, LL.D., Vicar General of the Bishop of Exeter, announced his intention of visiting 'the Parishes of Gluvias Penryn, Budocke and Falmouth, of the peculiar jurisdiction of the said Reverend Father, for the purpose of planting virtues and uprooting vices.' He summoned 'all Rectors, Vicars, Curates and Ministers in ye above Parishes, all Schoolemasters, Chirurgiens, Phisitions and Midwives to show their lycenses: all wardens and sidesmen to give in their presentments, and transcripts, all new to be sworn: all executors and executrices, the next of kin of persons dying intestate: administrators to pass their accompts and exhibit inventories." Accordingly Margaret Crewes, daughter and administratrix of Nicholas Gardiner of Gerrans, appeared and exhibited an Inventory of £81. The Churchwardens of Gerrans stated that "the surplice and Communion table linen are ragged and torn, and new should be provided." They presented Henry Crews for not paying the rate (£2/13/0) made for the re-edifying and repairing of the Church: Hugh Trevanion, esq., for not paying the same rate (in his case £1/4/6): and Mary, wife of Bryan Walters, and Joan Silwood, widow, for not coming to Church.

In 1684 the Churchwardens referred "to the want of 2 hoops for the bells," and stated that "the windows are much broken." In 1685 they stated that "the helling of the Church had been riffled by the late storm." In 1686 we find "the North Style of the Churchyard is broken down on one side. One woman a Dissenter and Baptist, whom both his Majestys Gracious proclamation takes off, and the constables usually present at the Half quarter sessions to the Justices of the Peace."

In 1725 J. Trenhayle, Rector, and Sam. Kempe, Churchwarden, appeared "at ye Visitation Court held at ye Manor of Penryn Foreign. In the following year they reported "the Parsonage house much out of repair."

A very important, but (till recently) strangely neglected, source of information about the spiritual condition of our Parishes in the 18th century and early 19th century is found in the "Returns" made to the printed questionnaires issued from time to time by the Bishops of Exeter to every incumbent in the diocese. Mr. Henderson was the first to show how much we can learn from them.

Here is the Return of 1779, made by the Curate of an absentee Rector.

ST. ANTHONY. I reside at Gerrans. This is a very small Parish and the inhabitants come constantly to Gerrans Church, and they have proposed service once a month at St. Anthony. Celebrations 4. Communicants 30—40. 30 Families. No Dissenters.

GERRANS. I reside here as a Licensed Curate 10 years. Salary £30. Mr. Williams is Rector. I take care of the Parish of St. Anthony, where I preach once a month. Sacrament once a month [a good deal more often than in most country Parishes at this period]. Communicants 60—70, sometimes 100. 110 Families. No Dissenters. Wm. Cornish, Priest.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARISH REGISTERS.

Everyone understands the value for the historian and genealogist of the Registers of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, kept by every Parish Priest in England since the 16th century. The Registers of Gerrans are among the most interesting in Cornwall. They were very carefully kept, and contain beautiful specimens of calligraphy; and many notes about persons and events in Gerrans during the last 400 years, such as "he had a coffin;" "he was vulgarly known as The Lancashire Piper;" "he was drowned from a rock at Polscatho, throwing a line to sea;" a man of the name of Allcutt was "otherwise Old Jamie;" and a "Man from Skye" was married at Gerrans. They also occasionally contain references to crises in the history of the nation at large, as well as to events of merely local interest.

The following entries are examples: "About Michaelmas in this year Oliver Cromwell Generall of the army, Anno Domini 1649." When the Commonwealth took the registers away from the Clergy, we find an entry "Wee the parishioners. . . . nominate Robert Scantlebury as Register" [=Registrar]. But not long after we read "Charles 2 came home" and the register was "returned to John Bedford" the Rector. The name and full titles of the King and Queens of England are given: *eg.* "Anno Domini 1538, and the 30 yeare of the Raygne of our soverayn lorde Kinge Henry the eighth, by the grace of God Kinge of England, Fraunce and Irelande, defender of the faith, and in the church of England and Irelande the supreme heade." At the beginning of 1611 is the heading "Hic incipit Registrum Tempore Johannis Dell, Rectoris Ecclesiae de St. Gerrans." In 1643 is written "Hic incipit Registrum tempore Johannis Bedford, Rector Sti. Gerransij." He appears to have delighted in his Register and taken great pains over it. He removed all his predecessors entries and copied them out again in his own hand, which is the neatest (Mr. Henderson remarks) that I ever saw previous to 1800. In 1653 the Puritan régime deprived him of his Register, and the precious volume was handed over to a semi-illiterate clerk. When Mr. Bedford came into his own again in 1660

it is needless to say that he tore out all Scantlebury's entries, and copied them out afresh, adding many which the Registrar's negligence had omitted, and explaining the meagreness of the years 1653—60 by lengthy notes relative to the affairs of the time. There is no cheap abuse of the Puritans—merely a plain and impartial statement of facts, which is far more impressive.

The late Dr. J. Hambley Rowe wrote an article on the Gerrans Registers, which was printed in the *West Briton* for 22 June, 1933. I have reproduced great part of it here (by kind permission of the Editor).

"I have recently had the pleasure of going through the fine transcription of the registers of the parish of Gerrans, made by that indefatigable transcriber, Mr. W. Martin Furze, of Falmouth. Of all the forty odd Cornish parish registers that he has transcribed Mr. Furze considers this one to be the most extensive and complete. Indeed, he says, "this register can rank amongst the most perfect in the kingdom." Three of the rectors deserve great praise, viz., Stephen Garth (1591-1609), John Dell (1611-1643), and John Bedford (1645-1692). The first of these carefully copied out on to parchment leaves (according to the distinct ordinance of Queen Elizabeth, of the year 1603) the entries made by previous rectors from December 21st, 1538. As the injunction compelling incumbents to keep records of baptisms, marriages, and burials was dated early in September, 1538, it will be seen that we have here a fairly prompt obedience to authority. In Cornwall there is only one parish which has an earlier entry, and that is Camborne, where it is recorded that Niclis John Ric(hards) married Elyzabeth Foster, 17th October, 1538. Of about 11,000 parishes in England, not more than 812 have their registers preserved from the year 1538. All sorts of causes have been concerned in rendering over 10,000 parish registers defective. Carelessness, damp, fire, and wanton destruction have all played their disastrous parts. All honour, then, to the rectors of Gerrans who have so well looked after their charge.

During the Civil War, when there was much disturbance in the kingdom, most parish registers are lamentably defective for the period 1642-1660. Gerrans, however, has fared comparatively well, but few baptisms having been omitted, and, perhaps, threequarters of the burials. No marriages for 1654, 1655, and 1656 are recorded in the parish registers. The reason is that they were solemnised in those days before a Justice of the Peace, and at Truro. In the

parish registers of St. Mary's they are duly recorded—eight in number. About 1730 to 1740 the rector, James Williams, was remiss in his duties. He entered the names of the infants he baptised, but did not take the trouble to say whose infants they were.

There are many items of interest to be found in the pages of these registers of a seaside parish. At least 49 drowned persons were laid to rest in the churchyard, very many of them before the passing of Davies Gilbert's Act, which ordained that the parish authorities were compelled to give Christian burial to all drowned persons washed up on their shores. Previous to that Act, it was nobody's duty to see to the interment of drowned persons. In some cases particulars of the drowning are given. In December, 1586, Rafe Walter, Rafe Timby, Otes Vose, Thomas Langdon, of Ruanlanyhorne, William (servant of Thomas Marshall), John Rodger and Johanna, his wife were all drowned at Tolverne Passage. Presumably, the ferry boat upset, with tragic result. In January, 1663, Ralph Chimoe, "that was drowned by the sudden sinking of a sand barge coming to Porthcule, was taken up at Millcannen" (near St. Anthony Point). Four men, whose names were unknown, were buried in June, 1822. "Drowned in Gerrans Bay by the upsetting of a boat belonging to H.M. Schooner, Pigmy, June 3rd, 1822. Two others of the crew were buried at Veryan."

Amongst other information we are enabled to recover the names of two mayors of St. Mawes, viz., George Tredenham in 1680, and Bennet Hendy, in 1690. I should be glad to know if a list of mayors of St. Mawes is in existence. From 1780 to 1786, Wm. Baker, the curate, who afterwards became rector of the parish, placed on record the diseases from which people died. A total of 142 people were buried in this period. Twenty seven of them died of consumption, ten of the bloody flux, nine of smallpox (in 1780), and four suddenly. One man died "with drinking brandy" at Portscathow, and a woman was "found dead in her bed supposed by drinking brandy." Richard Silwood, born in 1727, served the office of parish clerk upwards of 50 years, and was buried on December 12th, 1811.

The baptismal registers, perhaps, do not offer quite so many points of general interest, but they are well worth studying from many points of view. Statistically used, they give some indication of the growth of the parish, with its villages of Church Town, Trewithian, and Porthscatha. They mention the years when certain families came into the parish. The Dillons came in (it is said, from

Ireland), in 1643, and C. S. Gilbert, the historian of Cornwall, indicates they were related then to the Earls of Roscommon. One of the family, Capt. Robert Dillon, was commander of the Falmouth Packet, the Mercury, and survived all the dangers of his calling to die and be buried in the graveyard at Gerrans in 1798. The Nanpeans (now Nepean) flourished in the parish for a hundred years, finally dying out in 1661. The Hobbs, of Tregassa, appeared first in the parish in 1614, and the last of them married the rector, James Trenhayle, June 2nd, 1716, as his third wife. Curiously enough, all his three wives were called Jane. The Kempes, of Rosteague, came about 1624, when Nicholas Kempe bought that estate from the Mohun family; but they had all gone from the village by 1770. The Crewes, a branch of an old armigerous Devon family, are first mentioned in the registers in 1590, and the last of them was Mr. Wm. Crewes, who was buried in 1719. However, in 1802 there was a fresh importation of this family in the person of James Crewes, of Treliggan. As an indication that weaving was carried on in Cornwall, we find that one of the small family of Hunt was Edward Hunt, weaver, buried April 18th, 1593.

The most enduring family in Gerrans is probably the Jennings. For fully 300 years they have taken their full share of the life and work of the village, and the writer has before him particulars of the forty five families that are on record. These lists of the baptised are interesting from the point of view of Christian names. Stephen, Edward, and Nicholas were favourites, the last, perhaps, from the tradition that St. Nicholas was the patron saint of sailors. John, of course, is frequent; but not as frequent as in most Cornish parishes. Richard, Henry, William, and Thomas were the stock names, so to speak. Now and again we find a pleasant variation, as in the cases of Seraphim Stodden (1650), Vivian Metheris, Ferdinando Hobbs, Malachi Mallet, Colan Qinterle, and Denzil Webb. Among the ladies we find Paternell, Abigail, Thomasine, Persis, Aradice, Parthesia, Judith, Priscilla, Key, Ulalia, Duance, Radigon, Pascha, Letha (1565), Miriam, Lucretia, and Ursula.

An examination statistically of the number of baptisms and burials recorded year by year affords interesting information. We discover that the population of Gerrans in the ten years ending 1641, and preceding the Civil War, was about 608, and in the ten years ending 1671 was somewhere near 777, and in the next decade it was about 700. The figures which the preceding century yields are much smaller, namely, in 1562 to 1571, we get a population of 453, and in 1572 to 1581, 576, approximately. From those figures it would seem that an increase in the population of Gerrans took place in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, and that since then, at any rate to 100 years ago, the population of the parish has been fairly stationary. In the 1871 census (the latest year available to me) the population was 954.

Gerrans had its epidemics, notably so in 1730 and 1770, when 51 people were buried. In the former year, no fewer than 37 were children, and this epidemic was either diphtheria or smallpox, probably the latter. It is well known that children die from smallpox much sooner than adults. Milder epidemics happened in 1644 (32 deaths), 1715 (40 deaths), 1738 (32), and 1782 (33). The great plague of 1666 did not affect the village, nor did the epidemic of 1632. On May 18th, 1566, "Anne, the lazar woman," was buried, the only case of leprosy recorded in these registers.

These invaluable parochial documents of the country hold much of the history of old Cornwall that must not be lost.

J. Hambley Rowe."

CHAPTER V.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF GERRANS.

There is yet another source of information for the student of local History, entirely different from those which we have been examining in the last three chapters,—the study of Topography. All serious History is based on documents, and, by the side of the written documents we have been dealing with, we have much to learn from those "documents of indisputable sincerity"—ancient Place-names. They help us especially during the very early periods where written documents are few or non-existent. If we can get their original forms, they will tell us of features of the countryside which have now disappeared or been profoundly modified, of wild animals who are no longer to be found in the locality, and of persons who have not left their names in any book but who founded the hamlets and farms in which the people of our country Parishes now live.

The late Mr. Charles Henderson had compiled an exhaustive list of the place-names of Gerrans Parish (as of nearly every other Parish in Cornwall), and Mr. R. Morton Nance, whose knowledge of the Cornish, Welsh and Breton languages, is unrivalled in Cornwall, has suggested explanations of a great many of them.

TOPOGRAPHY OF GERRANS.

CURGURREL. *Curselar* 1327, *Curthelar* 1327, *Crukkeller* 1468, *Crukgorall* 1550, *Cruggular* 1538, *Crakeerell* 1570). The ancient name, which has no obvious Cornish meaning, became altered into *crukel gorhel*, ship barrow.

DENNIS at Porthcuel.=*hill-fort.*

EDON (*Edon allias Odon in Trelugan* 1650). *-don* is probably *ton*, greensward; *e* possibly for *hay:* see Lanhay.

EGENSWARRA vulgo Eglosharry, near Tregear? *ugans erow*, twenty acres (old Cornish *ereu*).

GERRANS (*Saint Gerendus* 1302, 1322, *Gerendus* 1327, *Seynt Gerent* 1360, *Gerens in Roseland* 1567).

GILLY (*Kelygon* 1327, *Kelly* 1538, *Gilly* 1416). *Kelly*, (or *Killi*) grove, *gun*, down.

GUASTA (1327). ?*gwastas*=level.

KEARN KEE (*Cornke* 1416, *Cornkee* 1416, *Carencay* 1613). *corn an kê*, corner of the hedge. The name is found in Luxulyan.

LANHAY (*Hae* 1327, *Enhee* 1465, *Haly alias Enhee* 1538). ?*an hay* the hedge or enclosure (O. Fr. *haie*, M. Eng. *hay*).

LANHOOSE (*Rus* 1250, *Lanrus* 1327, *Nansloes* 1416, *Nansloes alias Lanhoos* 1465, *Lanhoys* 1495, *Lanloth* 1538, *Lanhoos* 1538, *Lanhoose* 1540, *Lanehose alias Lanloth* 1586). *Rus* seems likely to be a personal name, and this his *lan*.

MERROSE (*Metros Kelygon* 1327, *Metheros juxta Trelugan* 1348, *Metheros* 1419, *Metheris* 1540). *Merther Rus*, suggests "the martyrion [chapel] of Rus."*

METHERS COLLYN (*Medros Gelven* 1290, *Metheros-Solven* 1538 *Metheros Vean* 1570, *Metheris-Collyn* 1584, *Medroscollyn alias Metheroscollyn* 1654). "Gelven" suggests *kelven* stone-cell, but the other spellings seem more like W. *collwyn*, hazel-grove.

MORVAST near Trelugan. ??*morva est*, eastern sea-shore.

NAMPITTY (or "Churchtown), (*Nanspeyti* 1322, *Nanseti* 1327, *Nanspeyty* 1366, *Lampeyty* 1419, *Nampeyty* 1513). *nan spyty*, hospital or hospice valley (as W. *ysbyty*).

PARK AN BANT in Rosteage (*Bants ground alias Park en bant alias Trebayn* 1715). *Pk. an bans*, the high-ground field.

PARK AN VRANE (*Ventonvrane* 1560, *Fentonvrane alias Park en vrane* 1715). *fenten vrân*, crow's well, *pk. an vrân*, the crow's field.

PELLYN (*Penlyn* 1327, *Penlen* 1403, *Pelyn* 1538 and 1670). *pen lyn*, pool end.

PENTOLVADDEN near Rosevine (*Pentalvadden* 1614, *Pentervadden* 1711, *Pedentervadden* 1738). *pentala-van*, high front end.

PENPERTH in Trewithian (*Penperth* 1419 and 1540, *Penpirth* 1538): *pen perth*, end of the thicket. *Penpirth Trewithian* 1680).

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* A very fine sepulchral urn was found at Merrows in Gerrans by Dr. J. M. Winn, and presented by him to the Royal Institution of Cornwall. It is described by him in a paper he read to the R.I.C. on 5th July 1844.

PETTIGREW near Portscatho (*Peticru* 1327, *Petygreue* 1549). *?(s)pytygrow* (*crow*), hospice hut, turned into a form resembling O. Fr. *pié de grue*, crane's foot, pedigree.

POLHENDRA (*Polhendre* 1327, and 1416, *Polhendra* 1540). *pol hendra*, farmstead pond.

POLINGEY (*Penelynsy* 1416, *Pennelynsy* 1495, *Penhalengy* and *Penalynsy Mill* 1538). *pen(an)velynjy*=the mill-house end.

POLKERTH in Trewence (*Polkerth* 1648). *pol kerghyth*, heron pool.

POLLAUGHAN (*Pollohan* 1260, *Polloghan* 1419 and 1538, *Pollowghan* 1590). *pol ōghan*, oxen pool.

PORTHCUEL.

PORTHERNICK (*Porthkernacke* 1567). *porth kernyk*, little-corner harbour (or, "rocky harbour").

PORTSCATHO (*Porthskathowe* 1592, *Porthcassoe* 1676). *porth scathow*, harbour of boats.

REDREAK in Trewithian (*Redreage alias Redreeack* 1664, *Redreack* 1664), perhaps earlier *res drethek*, sandy ford, with *th* lost.

RESORES near Lanhoose (*Reshoos* 1450, *Reshose* 1495, *Ressawes* 1613). *? res hōs*, duck ford.

ROSEVINE (*Rosfrein* 1250, *Rosurevn juxta St. Gerendus* 1302, *Roffryn* 1327, *Rosevreyn* 1419, *Rosvrayn* 1538, *Rosvryne* 1563, *Rosevrine* 1649). *rōs*, heath + *?* variant pl. (*breyn*) of *bran*, crow.

ROSTEAGE (*Rostaek* 1366, *Rostek* 1401, *Rystek* 1433, *Resteage* 1613)? *rōs tek*, fair heath.

TEERMARRACK (*Tremarracke* 1592, *Teremarracke* 1598). *tyr marghak*, knight's land.

THOM (1327).

TREGASSA (*Tregasse* 1322 and 1416, *Tregasta* 1327, *Tregassa* 1538 and 1567). Woza Tregastha Trewynan. *Tre* + *?Cado* (*Cassa*).

TREGASSICK (*Tregrasek* 1423, *Tregerasek* 1454, *Tregarasek* 1508, *Tregrasack* 1586). *Tre* + *Caradoc* (*Carasek*).

TREGEAR (*Capella Sancte Crucis de Tregaer* 1260, *Trekayr* 1416). *tre* + *ker*, camp.

TREGEAR WOON (*Tregaire Woone* 1588). *treger-wun*, camp town of the down or plain, *gun*.

TRELOAN (*Trevelowen* 1538, *Trelowan* 1540, *Treloan* 1643). *tref elowen*, town of the elm-tree.

TRELUGGAN (*Treluget* 1327, *Trelugan* 1346 and 1581). *tre* + *?* Illogan.

TREWAR in Rosteage (*Treweor* 1419, *Trevyor* 1538, *Trewor* 1606, *Trevor alias Trewor* 1715). *tre vūr*, great farm-place.

TREWINCE (*Trewyns in Ruselond* 1380, *Trewyns* 1538, *Trewynsse or Trewense* 1571). *tre* + *guyns*, wind.

TREWITHIAN (*Trewythyan* 1299, *Trewythyen* 1468, *Chappell in Trewithian* 1666). *? tre* + *Gwydhvan* (*Gwithian*).

VENTON VRANE (*Fentenwran* 1327). see *Park an Vrane*.

VRADDON HAY (*Brothenam* 1416, *Brothename* 1495, *Brothenhay* 1529). *? ? bro a Dhynam*, Dinam's country.

FIELD NAMES. (Tithe Apportionment 1841.)

CURGURREL. Beacon Close. Parkentol. *pk. an toll*, hole field.

KEARN KEE. Horneywink. ="out of the way," "remote," Eng. Dialect.

LANHAY. Park Go. *pk. gōth* (*th* silent), mole field, or goose field. Park Treath: *pk. treth*, sand field (unless *treth*, ferry, is suitable). Higher Crackage. ? Park Minnus. *pk. mūnys*, little field. Park Warro: *pk. a-wartha*, higher field, or *pk. erow*, acre field. Point Gilly. *? Poynt an gelly* (*kelly*), point of the grove.

LANDHOOSE. Trevenick Meadow. Burrow closes. Parkenponds: *pk. an pons*, bridge field. Creek Stephen, *cruk Stephen*, Stephen's barrow.

MERROSE. Dinnis: *dynas*, fort. Park in Burraws: *pk. an verghas*, the horses' field.

(These five from an older document. XVI. 104 in Mr. Henderson's Manuscripts.)

Parkencruge: *pk.an cruk*, the barrow field. Parkenvarryes: *pk. an verghas*, the horses' field. Parkendrie; *? pk. an drey(s)* briars field. Dennis: *dynas*, fort. Gew: *an gew* (*kew*), the enclosure.

METHERS COLLIN. Parkenprocter *i.e.* Procter's Meadow, generally connected with the Proctors of the Great Tithe owner, as at Cury.

PARK IN FRAME. ? Pk. an Frane=Pk. an Vrane above.

POLHENDRA. Parkentown: *pk. an ton* the lay field. Parkinmadgy: *pk. an ajy*, the gap [or 'unploughed' M. Förster.] field. Park Voran: *? pk.* (*an*) *voren*, the maid's field; or, if for *pk. forth yn*, the narrow way field. Parken ponds: *pk. an pons*, the bridge field. Park Hay: *pk. hay*, hedge or enclosed field (O. Fr. *haie*), or *pk. ke*, same meaning.

RESORES. Winnowing Close (winnowing was formerly done by letting the wind blow away husks from corn dropped from a measure.)

ROSEVINE. Pendanvaden: for *pen tal a-van*, as before. Gommas Ground: *? gammys*, (*cammys*), crooked. Old Rowan: *? gwel growan*, gravel field. Tondre Down (mentioned in 1567): *ton dra*, greensward farm. Port Kernick, *porth kernyk*. (see p. 42).

ROSTEAGE. Grebe: *an gryb* (*cryb*) the ridge. Cramfield. Deer Park. Trewar.

TREGASSA. Parkenball: *? pk. an bal*, mine field (? if possible here) cf. Pk. in Bells which seems for *mels*, p. of *mols*. Parkendever: *? pk. an deves*, sheep field, or *dever*, water. Park Cook: *pk. cōk*, empty, worthless, field; or *cōk*, cuckoo. Parkengregor *? pk. an gruyer*, the partridges' field, or *gregor*, *gre*, flock and O. Cor. *cor*, sheep, as in *Corlan*. Parkenpound: *pk. an pound*, pound-field. Lottery: ? Eng. "latter hay." Parkentower: *pk. an towargh*, the turf field. Parkentreath: *pk. an treth*, the sand field, unless "ferry" is possible. Windmill Field.

TREGASSICK. Vetan-Zellan: *? Fenten Sellan*, Sellon's well Penvers Hill: *? pen an verhas*, the horses' end. Parkandavis: *pk. an deves*, the sheep's field. Carnavers: *carn an verghas*, the horses' carn. Dennis: *dynas*, fort. Parkinover: *pk. an gover*, the stream [overflow from a well. M.F.] field.

TREGAYRE. Clap in Darvis suggests *cleth Pendarvis*, trench of Pendarvis. Gue: *an gew* (*kew*), the enclosure. Percamlyn: *? pk. camlyn*, crooked pond field, or "Hamlyn." Park an Garrick: *pk. an garrek* (*carrek*), the rock field. Parkenellick Moor: *pk. an helyk*, the willows field. Park in Bells: *pk. an mels*, the wether-sheep's field. Park in Bounder: *pk. an vounder*, the lane field, or *parkyn bounder*, the lane quillet. Park Polanghan: *pol oghan*, pool of oxen.

TREGAYRE OON. Gaw whidden: *an gew wyn*, the fair or white enclosure. Brake stigga: *? ? bré kestegow*, hill of labours or punishments (W. *cystagau*). Parkendarah: *pk. an darras*, the door field. Parkenbews: *pk. an bughas*, the cows' field. Parkenthorn: *pk. an "thorn"* thorn field. Ramsay. ? Eng. "ram's hay," (hay=enclosure, hedge, O. Fr. *haie*.)

TRELOAN. Gue: *an gew*: Craignellas and Crookenellis: *?crûk menelys*, piled up barrow; cf. Carnmenelys, from *manala*, to heap up, put up in sheaves, *manal*, sheaf.

TRELUGGAN. Parkencraig: *pk. an crug* (*cruk*), the barrow field. Morvast: *? Morva est*, eastern sea-shore. Crickstephen, Morvast: *cruk Stephen*, Stephen's barrow. Glease Morvast: *? gwel est morva est*. Parkencrowze, (1750): *pk. an grows*, cross field, or *parkyn crows*, cross quillet. Chapel Close. Borough Close: *? burrow*. Gleast: *? gwel est*, eastern field, same name as *Gleese*. Parkenmorrish: *pk.* (*an*) *marghas*, horses' field, or *parkyn*, little field. Glans Moor: *? gwel-nans-mor* sea vale field (if possible here). Parkenvaughan: *pk. an fon*, the hay field. Parkentodden: *pk. an ton*, the greensward (lay) field.

TREWINCE. Pick Heath: ? park, *heth*, deer, or barley. Higher Trelevan Close. Parkenbank: *pk. an bank*, the bank field. Pelyn Fields: *pen lyn*, pool end.

TREWITHIAN. Sannyshuts. Penperth. Redreak. Rundell Field.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF GERRANS, CORNWALL.

by

M. H. N. CUTHBERT ATCHLEY.

THE PRE-NORMAN WORK.

The Churchyard Cross. Close to the South Porch is a tall granite Cornish (or Keltic) "wheel" cross, and on both faces of its head a plain cross is cut, which, after many centuries of exposure to the weather, are both now indistinct save in a good light. The total height is nearly 7ft., and the entasis (curve) of the shaft is very noticeable and asymmetric. For many years—perhaps generations—it was used as a coping stone on the Churchyard wall and called by the children of the Churchtown[1] "the great custace."[2] When the Church was restored during 1850-1851, the cross was removed from the wall and set upon a new base in its present position. None can tell its age with certainty: while it is unlikely that it was made later than about the 10th century, its simplicity and general character suggest the possibility that it *may* have been some 300, or even 400 years, earlier.

The Keltic missionaries built their Churches with the East end square—*i.e.* on a rectangular plan, as distinct from the apsidal end usual on the Continent. This same square end to the Chancel may be seen, for instance, in the mediaeval Church of Gerrans, and in most other Churches of the British Isles, reminding us that Christianity was propagated in these Islands *mainly* by the Keltic missions.

[1] The village round a Parish Church is usually called the "Churchtown" in Cornwall.

[2] Custace, or *custis*, was a flat circular-shaped piece of wood with a handle, used in schools to slap children. The word is given in all the Cornish glossaries, and is akin to the old French *castier*, the old form of *chatier*. There is in Breton *kastiz*, meaning "punishment." To boyish fancy a round-headed cross would seem to suggest the familiar object. I am indebted to Mr. R. Morton Nance for this most interesting explanation.

CHURCHYARD CROSS AT ST. GERRANS
Photograph by Mr. Arthur Cockings

THE NORMAN CHURCH.

It is likely that parts of the North walls of the Nave, the Transept, and Chancel rest on Norman foundations.

The Font is a relic of the Norman Church and was made in the middle of the 12th century. It has a bowl, with arcaded sides, set on a central shaft with four others, one at each angle, all standing on a granite step. In 1851 additional steps were added.

THE 13th CENTURY ADDITIONS.

About the middle of this century some further changes were made: perhaps the Nave was lengthened at the West, but certainly much of the building was reconstructed on a cruciform plan, (the Norman Church may have been cruciform also—see above) with Chancel, Nave, and Transepts which remain to this day, save such parts as later additions have obliterated. The small lancet windows at the Western part of the Nave, and the East window of the Transept are typical examples of Cornish 13th century work: and the stone bench (the earliest form of Church seat for the laity) against two of the Transept walls, and the sepulchral slab in the recessed tomb are noteworthy. The Transept arch is, of course, modern: c. 1850.

The Chancel Walls belong to this same period, the 13th century: in the South wall the piscina (or drain down which is poured the water used in cleansing the Chalice and Paten during the Holy Communion) is unusually high up—some 5ft. 4ins. above the Nave floor—showing that at this date the floor was at least a foot higher than it is now. (See below.)

The North Doorway is partly old, retaining some 14th century stonework.

THE 15th CENTURY ADDITIONS.

The great plague called the "Black Death" during 1349 caused the death of hundreds of thousands of people—it is said that one in every four died of it—and consequently, with the fall in the population, there was small need for building until two or three generations later when the country was more than repeopled. By this time the desire for better light often resulted in the little lancets of the earlier times being replaced by the larger windows of the

day, or the Church being enlarged, as here by an aisle, to accomodate the increased congregation. For in those days everyone went to Church—to the Holy Eucharist—more or less each day before the Reformation upheavals, and again in many Parishes several times a week during the Church revival of Queen Anne's day.

The South Aisle of Gerrans Church was built about the middle of the 15th century, the older South wall of the Nave and Chancel being pulled down to make way for the very graceful and well proportioned arcade of seven bays (or arches), and this South Aisle absorbed the older South Transept. The piers average no more than about 9ft. centre to centre, but the perfection of the proportion makes them appear, at a short distance, to be considerably more. It was at this time that the floor of the Church was lowered at least one foot so as to obtain the desired height inside without raising the roof—for the building is on an exposed position and the winter gales are most violent. Both doorways have steps down into the Church.

The windows are of two lights, the present tracery to each is now modern, but the jambs (*i.e.* the moulded granite sides) are ancient. Notice that the Easternmost window of this South range has three lights to give better illumination to the altars. A small window at this time was inserted into the Chancel North wall, and is now placed in the East wall of the sacristy built in 1850-1851. The Westernmost window of the South Aisle is later than the others, either late 15th, or early 16th century. The Aisle East window is almost entirely original masonry and it has the charming refinement of the tracery beginning slightly below the line from which the arch springs, giving thereby more graceful lines than would otherwise be the case. The central void in its tracery is characteristic of much Cornish work.

The South Porch has been largely rebuilt, but it retains its cusped headed Holy Water basin. In this porch, in the sacristy, and outside it are lengths, totalling about 40ft., of the 15th century carved wall plates from the old roofs, nearly enough to form the plate for one side of the Aisle. The existing roofs are, of course, modern.

The Spire was built during the 15th century, angle buttresses cover the junction with the Nave as at Budock Church. A band of quartrefoils, two to each face of the octagonal Spire, divides it in

BENCH ENDS WITH SYMBOLS OF OUR LORD'S PASSION
(The one on the right shows the Thirty Pieces of Silver)

From a photograph by Mr. M. H. N. C. Atchley

two. Over the West doorway is a three light window and the bell chamber has two-light windows. The Spire was repaired nearly two centuries after it was built, the work being completed on 25th June, 1636.

The Benchends. In the early Middle Ages a stone bench against a wall was considered enough seating accommodation for the aged and infirm, as in the Transept, and the fit and young stood or knelt. In the 13th century a few Churches were provided with some wooden benches, but it was not until the 15th century that they became the normal practice. Six early 16th century benchends remain of the ancient seating of Gerrans Church. They are characteristically Cornish in design—a carved border to frame a traceried head over two panels, each with a shield and below a quartrefoil. Here the shields display symbols of our Lord's Passion:—the scourges and reed, the crown of thorns and spears, the whipping post, and the 30 pieces of silver—the price of Judas' betrayal—which is very rarely depicted, though to be seen in Cornwall on a benchend at St. Breward and another at Kilkhampton. One shield is charged with a pomegranite, the device of Catherine of Aragon, Queen of England from 1509 till 1536, and it would seem that these carvings were made between these years.

THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH.

In 1818 part of the roofs was destroyed by fire. Some rebuilding followed, and in 1850 considerable repairs and building were undertaken by an architect of much prestige and a student of ecclesiology, Mr. White, of Truro. Though the methods advocated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings were not understood in those days, we must, nevertheless, be thankful that so much has been spared. There are those, with no power of perception, who see Gerrans Church without realizing how much is left of the ancient building. After over 200 years neglect the fabric must have been in a deplorable condition of dilapidation (imagine one's house neglected for over 200 years!) so we must not condemn too readily the architect if more has not been preserved to us; for the latest scientific processes for repairing were then far less understood than now.

The Font cover, of traditional Cornish form, together with the Roodscreen, were made for the Church in 1851: against the latter the clergy stalls are returned to face east in accordance with the ancient rule of the Church.

A vague opinion seems to have arisen that this building retains neither historic nor architectural interest, which, it is hoped, this account shows to be a mistake.