

## Geraint ap Einudd to the rulers of Brittany

Geraint ap Einudd, the brother of Eudaf Hen (a.k.a. Octavius) in this family line, was king of the area in north-east Wales called Llydaw, and his son Cynan was made Lord of Meriadog, the portion to the east of the river Clwyd. Around AD 300, the Roman emperor Maximian sought help with a campaign in Gaul against a rebellious group. Cynan responded with an army of men from Llydaw and was rewarded afterwards with a substantial area of land in Brittany which he called Llydaw after his homeland. Many soldiers stayed and settled, and Cynan is remembered as the founder of Brittany. His son Ceris received the honorific title of Gradlon Mawr (holding rank among ships, presumably earned as result of his family's sea-faring background). He was a maternal grandson of Carausius whose daughter was the mother of Magnus Maximus (a.k.a. Maxen Wledig) by Constans I. He became a breakaway emperor in Britain as Carausius II. As Gradlon he is feted in the history of Brittany and central in the fable of a flooded land, portrayed in the painting by Evariste Luminais and a statue in the city of Quimper in south-west Brittany.



**The Flight of Gradlon Mawr, c1884, oil, by Evariste Luminais**



**Statue of King Gradlon, Quimper Cathedral, by Amedee Menard and Alphonse Le Brun**

Gradlon's son Salomon/Selyf fathered Aldroen, who also ruled as King of Brittany, and also Constantine Waredwr/Custinnen. When Magnus Maximus died in AD388 Aldroen was asked to step in as ruler but instead designated his brother who took the title Constantine III, who later took an army into Gaul to contend for the Roman Empire against the sitting emperor Honorius and was eventually killed in AD411.

Three sons of Aldroen are of note; Budic, Yspwys and younger brother Erich. Budic ruled Brittany as Budic I, and around AD437 the family gave sanctuary to Ambrosius (son of Custinnen ap Maxen Wledig, killed fighting against the Picts in AD425) who was cheated of his legacy when he came of age and his brother-in-law Vortigern refused to relinquish the throne he had been holding for that event. Eight years later, when Vortigern's Saxon mercenaries were starting to take over eastern England, Budic provided an army led by Yspwys to depose Vortigern and install Ambrosius to his rightful position.

The throne of Brittany was then taken by the son of Erich ap Aldroen, the nephew of Budic I, called after his uncle, Budic II. He was born in the northern part of Brittany known as Cornouaille, and when his lands was besieged around AD 478 he fled back to his family roots and was given sanctuary at the court of Aircol Lawhir (a.k.a. Agricola) at Penally In Dyfed. There he married Anowed, sister of St. Teilo. Three of their sons became revered as saints; Isfael (Ismael), Euddogwy and Tyfei). A fourth son was Hoel, whose son Tewdwr eventually became a ruler of Cornouaille.

Budic later reclaimed his throne in Brittany and in legend was joined for a while by Teilo who helped by disposing of a terrorising dragon. Budic also had a daughter who became known as St. Gwen the Three-Breasted, a charming title which makes me think that she had an accessory nipple with enough underlying breast tissue to enlarge and lactate when feeding.

Aircol was a pious man who, despite having a son, Vortepir who was known as a tyrant, supported the Christian church and funded the first church at Llandaff, where St. Teilo became the first Bishop.

St. Ismael is associated with several churches in Pembrokeshire and the story of Budic is told in the one in the village of St. Ismael, although there is a major error in that Cornouaille is misconstrued as referring to Cornwall.

### Family tree

Geraint ap Einudd AD235, King of Llydaw, North East Wales



Cynan (Meriadoc) AD265, Ruler/King of Brittany  
(Legendary founder of Brittany, awarded lands by Maximian for supporting him with his army against a rebellion)



Ceris ap Cynan, *Gradlon Mawr* AD300, King of Brittany, rebelled as Carausius II



Selyf/Salomon ap Gradlon AD330, King of Brittany



Aldroen ap Selyf, AD360, King of Brittany



Budic I, AD390,  
King of Brittany

Yspwys, AD395

Erich AD425

Bigon Fashod AD 430

When Vortigern refused to cede the throne to Ambrosius when he came of age, Ambrosius was forced to flee to Budic for sanctuary. He later returned with an army and successfully reclaimed his inheritance with Vortigern's destruction.

Budic II, AD470

Besieged by Franks in his fortress at Mont St Michel, Budic II fled to Dyfed to the court of Aircol Lawhir at Penally, where St Teilo was in residence. There he married Anowed, Teilo's sister. Among their children were Hoel, who later returned with Budic and St Teilo and reclaimed his kingdom of Brittany, and four saints: Euddogwy (a.k.a. Oudoceus), who became bishop of Llandaff, Ishmael, who became bishop at St David's, Teifi, who was 'martryred' and St Gwen Teirbron (the three-breasted). She married St Fragan and bore him Saints Wethenoc, Jacut, Winwaloe and Creirwy. She later married Eneas Ledewig (Aeneas the Breton) and bore him St Cadfan.

First wife: Daughter of Ceris ap Caradog, aka Carausius, usurping emperor.  
Second wife: Darerca (St), mother of Ceris.

Gradlon is an honorific title meaning 'Holding rank among ships'.  
Married Tigridia ferch Calpurnius

Married Flavia ferch Rusticus in Gaul

Selyf's unnamed sister has a relationship with Constans, son of Constantine, producing usurping emperor, Magnus Maximus (Maxen Wledig in Welsh history).

Married Junia d'Auxerre, and later her sister Este, ferch Decimus, Prefect of Gaul.

Married Ivoire ferch Llancelodd. Took an army into Gaul to contend for the Western Roman empire and was killed in AD411

## Footnote

Brittany was conquered by Julius Caesar in 56BC and it became part of the Roman Empire known as Armorica, a Romanisation of the Celtic word for 'seaside'. After the withdrawal of Rome in AD410, the area saw an influx of Britons from Wales and Cornwall, some to escape the Anglo-Saxon invasion that was driving the ancient Britons from England. One example is the settlement of St Malo, named after the Welsh Malo d'Aleth, who became one of the most famous saints in France.

## Further reading

Shearman JF (1882) *The Celto-Britons of Armorica*. The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland, Vol 5, No 99, pp597-630.

Wollcott D. *The family of Emyr Llydaw*. [www.ancientwalesstudies.org](http://www.ancientwalesstudies.org)

Wollcott D. *Who was Yspwys in Welsh history?* [www.ancientwalesstudies.org](http://www.ancientwalesstudies.org)

*Budic I of Brittany*. [https://en.wikipedia.org.uk/Budic\\_I\\_of](https://en.wikipedia.org.uk/Budic_I_of_Brittany) Brittany

*Budic II of Brittany*. [https://en.wikipedia.org.uk/Budic\\_I\\_of](https://en.wikipedia.org.uk/Budic_I_of_Brittany) Brittany