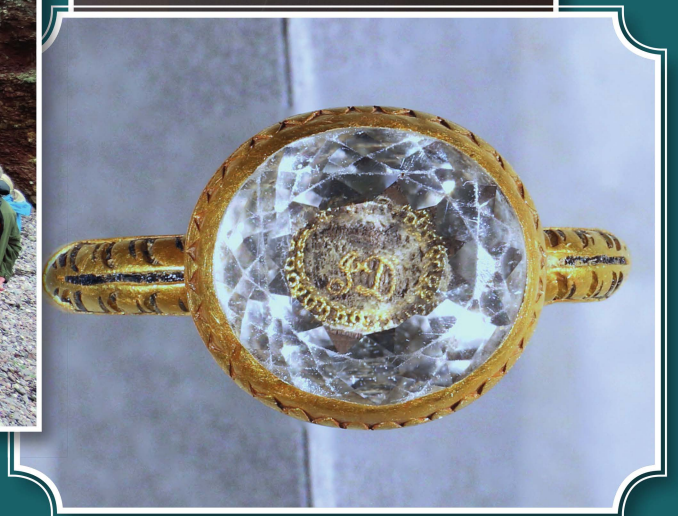


ISLE OF MAN STUDIES

Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Vol. XVIII 2023



Isle of Man Studies (Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society) is published by the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society.

Copyright © Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society 2023.

All rights reserved.

No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photographic, electrostatic, recorded or otherwise, without the previous written permission of the copyright holder.

The opinions are those of the author(s) alone.

ISBN: 978-1-7394236-0-5

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication - a catalogue record for this volume is available from the British Library.

This volume should be cited as *Isle of Man Studies XVIII* (2023)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5284/1050092>

Isle of Man Studies is published in the Isle of Man by the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society, a charity registered in the Isle of Man no. 428. Details of, and contacts for, the Society can be found on the inside back cover of this volume.

The Society welcomes proposals for contributions for future editions of *Isle of Man Studies*, the Editor can be contacted by email at Editor@manxantiquarians.com

Front cover photographs:

- Common Blue butterfly, Marine Drive - see page 217 ff.
- Greeba Mill cruciform window(?) - see page 5 ff.
- Mourning ring (AD 1650-70 era) - see page 184 ff.
- Layers of geology at Langness - see page 201 ff.

Printed and bound in Great Britain by the Short Run Press, Exeter, Devon. This publication was produced using FSC® certified paper.





ISLE OF MAN STUDIES

The Proceedings of the
Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Volume XVIII

2023

Editor

Dave Martin BSc Hons, MRIN, FSA Scot, FRSA

Published by the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Contents

New Light on Manx Keeills: an archaeological and architectural reassessment of the structural and material remains of medieval chapels on the Isle of Man	
<i>Andrew Johnson</i>	5
Early Bronze Age Stone Battle-Axes and Axe-hammers of the Isle of Man	
<i>Amber Roy</i>	29
“Shee was the wysest woman in this lande” Margaret Quane (1616)	
<i>Stephen Miller</i>	39
Neolithic street lighting, Christian symbolism or sexual metaphor: the use of quartz in the Manx vernacular built environment	
<i>Patricia Tutt</i>	53
The Revival of Traditional Songs and Music in the Isle of Man	
<i>George Broderick</i>	69
‘In medio duorum animalium’, the ‘Habakkuk motif’: carved images for ‘recognising’ Christ on Viking-Age Manx sculpture as an icon in the search for Redemption	
<i>Ross Trench-Jellicoe</i>	85
‘Extinct’ Manx Butterflies	
<i>Garry Curtis</i>	127
John Toland and the Druids on the Isle of Man	
<i>Euan McArthur</i>	133
Manaw of the Britons: The Pre-Viking Kings of the Isle of Man	
<i>Ben Guy</i>	145
Bishop Hill’s Cathedral of 1886	
<i>Peter Litman</i>	162
‘Kione Speiney’ or ‘Kione Spainey’ - the conundrum of ‘Spanish Head’?	
<i>George Broderick</i>	171
Reviews	
<i>The Island of Extraordinary Captives</i> by Simon Parkin, reviewed by Yvonne Cresswell	176
<i>Barbed wire university</i> by Dave Hannigan, reviewed by Alan Franklin	178
<i>Clarke, Petit and St Mark’s</i> by Philip Modiano, reviewed by Katie King	179
<i>Favourite of Fortune</i> by Andrew Bond, Frank Cowin, and Andrew Lambert, reviewed by Matthew Richardson	181
<i>Spring Tides</i> by Fiona Gell, reviewed by Andrew Brand	181
Recent accessions and developments at the Manx Museum	186
Society Business	
The Society in 2021 and 2022	194
Excursions	196
Obituary - Sandra Bolton	224

John Toland and the Druids on the Isle of Man

Euan McArthur

This article examines the historical study of the Druids on the Isle of Man. It explores a variety of writers' characterisations of the Druids and Man's place in the 'Celtic' world from the sixteenth century to today, with an especial focus on John Toland. Although ideas about the Druids grew more from guesswork than clear evidence, they were crucial in defining Manx identity and history, with enduring effects into the present.

Introduction

John Toland (1673–1722), Irish philosopher and deist, never visited the Isle of Man. The Druids were never recorded as having been here. Yet historians of Man from the late sixteenth century, including Toland, confidently recorded their presence. Some revered the Druids; others lacerated them for their barbarities. This article will attempt to how the memory of the Druids was revived by English historians, and became inscribed in Manx historiography. It will argue that Toland's *History of the Druids* (c1718–20) represented a significant text, one which has been overlooked by Manx scholars. Toland regarded the Manx Druids unfavourably, and in a relative novelty firmly associated the island with a wider 'Celtic' community. Toland remains the subject of contemporary historical scholarship, and it will be argued that his work has been the subject of some misinterpretation. In order to appreciate Toland's place, this essay will begin and conclude by examining the historiography of the Druids in Man.

The first Manx Druids

The Druids came to prominence in English historiography in the sixteenth century, with the re-discovery and re-use of scattered references to them in ancient texts from the second century BC to the fourth century AD. A similar pattern emerged on the European continent.¹ Classical Greek and Roman sources contained hints, necessarily second-hand and often admittedly based on hearsay, about who the Druids were. These cannot detain us here, but the general impression was that the Druids were high-ranking men with religious, political, legal, and philosophical functions; they are sometimes noted as living in woodland groves, and practising various rituals, including human sacrifices. Most authors recorded their presence in Gaul, seeing them as spreading to Britain, with only Julius Caesar stating that they 'originated' in the latter.

From this fragmentary and ambiguous base, early modern scholars imagined the Druids as 'barbarian sages, primeval Christians, champions of liberty, [and] repositories of mysterious wisdom'.² Britain's 'national folk-lore' regarding the Druids derives from the ruminations of this period, rather than classical sources or ancient survivals.³ Historians embellished, speculated, and concocted outright inventions about the Druids and their centrality to British history. Tudor antiquarian John Leland (1503–52) influentially 'cherished' them. Leland trumpeted their apparent learnedness, promoting a patriotic idea of British ancestors that was adopted by numerous other historians.⁴ William Camden, a towering figure of British antiquarianism for over a century, looked kindly on them in successive editions of his *Britannia* from 1586 to 1610. Designating them 'our Druids' based on various bits of mistranslation and guesswork, Camden cast them as monotheists (believers in one God, rather than polytheists) preparing the way for Christianity.⁵ Others saw in the Druids noble savages, living in a primitive golden age. The poet Michael Drayton called them 'secret Bards' and philosophers in his *Polyolbion* (1612); many artists took a similar view.⁶ These views were not mutually exclusive. In the main, there developed a 'consensus' during the seventeenth century that the Druids were a wise and quasi-Christian people who had converted willingly to the true faith.⁷

Some seventeenth-century scholars identified the Druids with scriptural figures; the eighteenth-century witnessed various authors claim them as 'virtuous sages', again with quasi-Christian beliefs, or as practising a form of 'Natural Religion'.⁸ Others disputed this appreciation, insisting that Christianity had swept aside

1. Piggott 1968, ch 4

2. Piggott 1968, 15

3. Piggott 1968, 157

4. Hutton 2009, 59; Owen 1962, 32

5. Owen 1962, 39

6. Piggott 1968, 139

7. Owen, 1962, 60–5

8. Piggott 1968, 142

a barbarous Druid religion.⁹ English antiquarian Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1587) criticised the Druids for perverting the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.¹⁰ John Milton called them 'factious and ambitious',¹¹ and scholars such as Philemon Holland (1552–1637) and John Aubrey (1626–97) found the Druids 'savage'.¹² Aylett Sammes's *Britannia Antiqua Illustrata* (1676) struck a similar tone, emphasising their 'idolatry and human sacrifices' to show the dangers of superstition.

How, in these circumstances, did the Druids make it to Man? Looking back, Hector Boece's 1526 *Scotorum Historiae*, responsible for popularising the idea that the Druids were sages, was also probably the first to place the Druids on Man. Drawing upon a reference in Tacitus to the Romans attacking Druids on 'Mona', mostly taken, then as now, to refer to Anglesey, Boece probably 'removed them to the more northern island' to bring them in a Scottish sphere of influence.¹³ Boece's *Historiae* was riddled with legends favourable to his native Scottish kingdom, so this was not an unusual manoeuvre. Scholars normally developed their accounts of the Druids in this manner. For Boece, Man was the 'principall seite of the preistes namit Driades'.¹⁴ Boece rendered Man a 'College of Clerkis', with the Druids priests overseen by a kind of 'bishcop' who combined temporal and spiritual authority.¹⁵

Historians occasionally cited Boece's account. Artists embellished it. Thomas Nashe, an Elizabethan playwright writing about magic, called the Druids of Man 'great conjurers',¹⁶ while Drayton referred to them in a 1598 poem, 'Elinor Cobham to Duke Humphrey'. Telling the true story of a fifteenth-century English noblewoman imprisoned on the island, Drayton imagined Cobham observing that 'They say, the Druides once lived in this Isle, / This fatall Man, the place of my Exile'.¹⁷ On this occasion, Drayton had had them practising dark arts.

Boece's positive image was incorporated into William Blundell's *A History of the Isle of Man* (1648–1659), a widely influential text in Manx

historiography. The *History* cited Boece in this regard, as well as scholars such as Camden and Inigo Jones, who had placed the Druids on Anglesey rather than Man.¹⁸ Blundell was highly critical of Boece's fables elsewhere, but he argued for the presence of the 'famous learned Druids' on Anglesey and Man, given their close proximity.¹⁹ Drawing upon a variety of sources, Blundell accepted that the Druids instituted episcopacy, essentially believed in a Holy Trinity, and reached high attainments in 'civil government' and the sciences. The institutions of the Deemsters and Keys are accounted Druidical in origin. Classical sources suggested that the Druids were reluctant to commit their laws into writing, and Blundell drew an affinity between this and the oral transmission of the Manx 'breast' law by the Deemsters.²⁰ These Druids resembled modern Britons and Christians, while also showing a Manx tinge.

Blundell's work was widely read, in manuscript and print. Sections were included in a 1695 edition of Camden's *Britannia*, but the only parts included regarding the Druids referenced the oral transmission of Manx laws. William Sacheverell's *An Account of the Isle of Man* (1702), also drawing upon Blundell, went further. Sacheverell contended, harking back to Boece, that Man, 'rather than Anglesey was [the Druids'] principal seat' (emphasis added).²¹ He connected, again, Manx government and the 'breast laws' to Druidic foundations.²² In an appendix to the *Account*, however, is 'A Short Dissertation on the Mona of Caesar and Tacitus' by poet and satirist Thomas Brown. This comprehensively showed the reader that Boece's history was 'without countenance'.²³ Curiously, Sacheverell did not incorporate its insights into his main text, which continued to be read and cited, including the information about the Druids.

An emerging novelty in Druid historiography concerned the ascription of megalithic tombs to them. Ancient stone circles, still firmly associated in the public mind with the Druids, were in fact of an earlier period; but the historians continued apace. John Aubrey, from the 1660s onwards, was the first to devote significant research to the idea that monuments such as Stonehenge were built by the ancient Britons, dovetailing with his knowledge of Druid religion.²⁴ Aubrey's ideas

9. Kidd 1999, 205

10. Owen 1962, 36

11. Milton 1695, 63

12. Piggott 1968, 137–8

13. Owen 1962, 28–9

14. Boece 1821, xlvi

15. Boece 1821, 53–4

16. Nashe 1594

17. Drayton 1695, 111

18. Jones 1725, 4

19. Blundell 1876, 11–12

20. Blundell 1877, 6, 66, 77, 84

21. Sacheverell 1859, 8

22. Sacheverell 1859, 23, 72

23. Sacheverell 1859, 113

24. Owen 1962, 108–109

circulated in manuscript, and John Toland talked to Aubrey about this idea in 1694.²⁵ A 1695 edition of Camden's *Britannia* referenced Druid monuments, though not in Man. It began to suffuse historians' work, and was most prominently argued by Toland, Henry Rowlands, and William Stukeley.²⁶ Stukeley's work on these monuments over the 1720s to 1740s, delivered partly in reaction to Toland's, staunchly re-argued the case for the essentially Christian Druids.²⁷

Reverend Rowlands, in *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* (1723), sought for a middle ground, painting them 'patriarchal, Old Testament Druids' without disguising their barbarity. He eagerly analysed the Druids' 'altars of stone'.²⁸ Rowlands's Druids were Cambocentric, but he tactfully reflected upon the dispute between 'Welsh and the Scottish antiquaries' (including Boece). Though firmly of the opinion (following Tacitus) that Anglesey was their seat, he granted it 'true and tenable', given the Druids' dispersion, that they retreated to Man from Roman persecutions.²⁹ Rowlands affirmed this at various points, even concluding that, after fleeing Mona, their 'chief seat and residence was in the Isle of Man, as the Scottish authors unanimously affirm.'³⁰

John Toland's 'Celtic religion' on the Isle of Man

The Manx Druids had, by the early eighteenth century, developed two roles. Firstly, they proved a bone of contention between Scottish and Welsh antiquaries. Those claiming that the Druids were primarily based in Anglesey or Man might deride, ignore, or make minor concessions to one another. Secondly, those writing histories of Man painted the Druids as a positive force. Blundell, Sacheverell, and Rowlands all acknowledged their learning and art of government, even attaching them to Manx-specific institutions. Brown dissented, while still assigning the Druids a positive role in early Britain. John Toland developed a new perspective, portraying Man's Druids in adverse terms, against the trend of Manx and wider scholars. In two significant novelties, he described these Druids and Man as belonging to a 'Celtic' sphere, and descended to the level of studying Manx 'cairns' and 'temples'.

Toland's *Specimen for a Critical History of the Celtic Religion* (planned for publication as the *History of the Druids*) was first published four years after his death, in 1726. The *History* comprised three letters to Robert Molesworth, a nobleman and former Irish MP, written between 1718 and 1720. Scholars have subjected the text, like Toland's literature generally, to much analysis. Significantly, our interpretation regarding its negative slant on the 'Celt' runs against much recent literature on Toland.

To understand Toland's narrative regarding the 'Celtic religion' and Man we must first understand Toland himself. Politically, he has been understood as a 'republican': a supporter of eighteenth-century Whig causes such as free Parliaments and English liberties, rather than an anti-monarchist, or democrat. Religiously, he was a fierce opponent of orthodoxy and the rights of the established church. His own beliefs were close to deism, a 'reasonable' religion stripped of 'revealed' or supernatural features. He was of Irish extraction, and though he sometimes evoked his homeland fondly, he repudiated the Catholicism on which he was raised.³¹ He studied and debated theology in Glasgow, Leiden, and Oxford in the 1690s. After returning to Ireland in 1697, he fled when the Irish House of Commons sentenced that *Christianity not Mysterious*, perhaps his most famous book espousing deist ideas, be burned and Toland himself arrested.³² He then based himself in England, with occasional forays to the continent, attacking 'Popery' in various forms. For Toland, this often meant Anglicanism as much as Roman Catholicism, placing him on the extreme end of the political and ecclesiastical spectrum.

Nonetheless, Toland operated within the Whig political mainstream in the early 1700s.³³ He carried out several diplomatic endeavours, including delivering the Act of Settlement (ensuring a Protestant succession of English kings) to the future George I. The government commissioned him to produce *The Memorial of the State of England* (1705) defending religious toleration. He operated more on the fringe after 1708, but continued to have the ear of those in high government.³⁴ He was an active historian, and in his political literature appeared an 'aggressive Englishman', opposing the tyrannical French and his 'grossly superstitious native Irish'.³⁵ Where did the Druids come into this? Before the

25. Piggott 1968, 143–44

26. Piggott 1968, 145, 148.

27. Champion 2001, 330; Piggott 1968, 154

28. Piggott 1968, 140, 149

29. Rowlands 1766, 78–9

30. Rowlands 1766, 102, 108

31. Simms 1969, 319

32. Simms 1969, 311

33. Daniel 2008

34. Simms 1969, 314–15

35. Sullivan 1998, 19

History of the Druids, Toland's *Nazarenus* (1718) waded into the debate. Its second part imagined a pure, early Irish Christianity, unsullied by superstition and committed to freedom of conscience before the coming of Roman missionaries.

Catholic and Protestant Irish patriots had read their pre-Roman history in positive terms. Some modern historians argue that Toland consistently espoused such a patriotic line.³⁶ In studying Gaelic texts and history, he was projecting a 'Celtic cultural heritage' and contributed to 'the reawakening of an Irish nationalist consciousness'.³⁷ On this reading, Toland was 'reconstructing an ancient Celtic Christianity (in *Nazarenus*) and a pre-Christian antiquity (in the [*History of the Druids*]) [...] inventing or imagining a valuable and prescriptive Irish past, free from confessional and political corruption'.³⁸ *Nazarenus* supposedly celebrated early Christianity, with the *History of the Druids* doing the same for another early Irish community, the wise Druids.

Toland had not abandoned his native land. Like his addressee, Molesworth (Irish born but of English descent), he occupied an ambiguous political position. The 'Anglo-Irish' constituency was often internally divided.³⁹ Toland and Molesworth were sceptical of the 'native' Irish and hostile towards Catholics. But both believed that the Protestants in Ireland (largely of English descent) ought to be afforded powers independently of the English or British parliament.⁴⁰ They combined, even into the 1720s, to oppose measures diminishing the power of the Irish parliament.

There is some validity to seeing *Nazarenus* as supporting the Irish, and even wider Celtic, cause. The text praises the Irish, Scots, and 'Western Britons' as 'the last of all European nations that submitted' to the 'Roman Church'.⁴¹ It extolled that 'solid Learning and pure Christianity, that anciently flourish'd in the most distant even of the British Ilets'.⁴² This 'Antient Irish Christianity', preceding but also including St Patrick, was apparently plain and pure.⁴³ Crucially, he compared the Roman church's suppression of Irish Christianity to the Anglican intolerance, using his historical analysis to launch a contemporary assault.⁴⁴

This strategy hints at Toland's superficial attachment to Ireland: rather than banging a nationalistic drum, the Irish served a theological moral. Perhaps more significantly, any patriotism in *Nazarenus* jarred with the portrait of the Celtic population in the *History of the Druids*. As noted, it has been held that Toland *continued* to celebrate the ancient Irish (as pre-Christian Druids) in this text, in even a 'pan-Celtic' perspective.⁴⁵ Robert Sullivan has argued that the Druids of the *History* are 'essentially rational' and represent a viable Celtic past, even incorporating England.⁴⁶ Others have argued that a sense of Irish 'brotherhood' pervades the *History*,⁴⁷ and perhaps even a pan-British solidarity, with the focus upon Britain's Highlands and islands reflecting '[Toland's] literary sources, rather than personal bias or interest'.⁴⁸

These are curious notions. The *History* repeatedly attacks the Druids for their 'priestcraft', a derogatory term for religious ministry. Historians have previously recognised that the *History's* 'attack on Druidism masked a covert assault on the Church of England'.⁴⁹ Contemporary sympathisers and detractors, too, thought it was 'against Christian priests'.⁵⁰ Alongside Molesworth, the *History* circulated among Whigs hostile to 'priestcraft'.⁵¹ This would be the common reading of the work. Rather than being a cosmopolitan or patriotic Irishman, our analysis will suggest that Toland's deployed positive and negative views of the Celtic past to support his prejudices.

The *History's* reliance upon authorial fancy, extrapolations from manuscript sources, and the application of knowledge about Gallic Druids to Britain did not distinguish it from contemporary works. Its disparagement of 'Celtic' culture did. Toland's priests of 'Celtic religion' are just that – 'priests' – which for Toland always carried a negative connotation. He calls the Druids a perfect 'Heathen Priesthood', their history a microcosmic 'History of Priestcraft', because of their oppressive practices.⁵² The Druids occasioned the very 'coming of the word' ('Priestcraft'), according to Toland's etymological analysis.⁵³ They led their people 'blindfold', and Toland instructs us to 'learn not to be so deceiv'd'.⁵⁴ Toland's Druid priests have

36. Kearney 1997, 159; Sullivan 1998, 28

37. Pierre Lurbe, in Champion 2001, 326n. and 324

38. Pierre Lurbe, in Champion 2001, 325–6

39. Smyth 1993

40. Sullivan 1998, 21–2

41. Toland 1718, 2

42. Toland 1718, 5

43. Toland 1718, 17

44. Toland 1718, 40; Simms 1969, 316–17

45. Champion 2001, 337

46. Sullivan 1982, 185; Sullivan 1998, 23–4, 30

47. Harrison 1996, 252

48. Champion 2001, 332

49. Hutton 2009, 78; Owen 1962, 117

50. Champion 2001, 330, 337

51. Champion 2001, 338

52. Toland 1726, 8

53. Toland 1726, 9

54. Toland 1726, 10

similar political powers to those which Blundell and Sacheverell hinted at in Man, but now in negative, tyrannical terms. Their learning is accounted 'Sophistry', their religion (really 'juggling') a means to arouse 'servile dread and terror of the Divinity'.⁵⁵ They were guilty of 'fraudulent Superstitions, and barbarous Tyranny exercis'd over the credulous people'.⁵⁶ They 'pretended' miracles, and the 'Priests' manipulation was 'detrimental, pernicious, and destructive'.⁵⁷ Their history confirms that 'the multitude' have always 'swallow[ed] secrets of natural Philosophy for divine Miracles'.⁵⁸ A substantial part of Toland's *History* examined Druid 'altars' and 'temples', following Aubrey in part. For Toland, however, these are analogous with oppressive Christian structures, with the Druids 'thick as Parish Priests'.⁵⁹

Toland subsumes Man in this narrative: he presumes all Celtic parts, ultimately, to be equivalent. Though he occasionally acknowledges the Druids' habitation in England, Toland presses that they were most powerful among the 'Celtic' peoples of Ireland, the islands, and Scottish Highlands. He makes clear their origins in present-day France: Toland is adamant that the Druids originated in 'antient Gaule (now France, Flanders, the Alpine regions, and Lombardy)', and not 'among the Gothic nations', undermining a Britain-wide Druidic tradition.⁶⁰ He also supposes commonalities between ancient and modern Celts, often around proposed linguistic unities.⁶¹ The Manx, among the rest, form(ed) part of this Celtic, Druidic community.⁶² Toland makes clear throughout that the 'Celtic colonies' history may instruct us today, even if not 'useful or agreeable'.⁶³

Toland suggests that Druidism reverberates into the present: he names Ireland and Man among those places where Druidism survived longest and its 'memory is best preserv'd'.⁶⁴ Here, he is following Sacheverell and possibly the 1695 *Britannia*. More generally, he observes the 'common people' of Ireland apparently continuing Druidic customs.⁶⁵ He frequently scorns the

'vulgar Irish' and 'ignorant country people'.⁶⁶ He notes, too, that in the Hebrides (until 1266 politically united with Man) the 'vulgar still believe' in witchcraft and wizardry.⁶⁷ He observes a profusion of Druidic monuments across Celtic Britain, but fewer in England, 'where culture has mostly destroy'd or impair'd' them.⁶⁸ This puts clear water between England's Brittonic past and later 'Gothic' (Anglo-Saxon) civilisation.⁶⁹ He attributes significance, throughout, to Druidic monuments and words remaining in Celtic regions,⁷⁰ and judges that that 'deep root' of 'Superstition' is still manifest.⁷¹ Toland's criticism stood contrary, in this respect, to patriotic Scottish and Irish histories of the time. These either ignored the Druids, painted their influence as effaced, or discerned positive continuities, as historians of Man had.

Toland's portrait of Druidical tyranny dovetailed, importantly, with contemporary English prejudices towards Britain's Celts and marginal people. Contemporary English opinion was widely fearful of Scottish and Irish culture, with the 1715 Jacobite uprising fuelling this. The notion that Druidry and the Celts came from Gaul harmonised nicely, too, with the anti-French policies Toland and other hard-line Whigs supported.⁷² Toland's circle expressed jealousy of English liberties, and increasingly conceived of these as a 'Gothic' inheritance shared with other Germanic peoples.⁷³ In the late 1690s William Molyneux, another Anglo-Irish politician and thinker, argued for the Irish Parliament being part of the 'noble Gothic constitution' brought over with the English, and the rights of Englishmen there.⁷⁴ Molesworth produced texts expounding 'English Whig' adherence to the 'Gothick Constitution' of 'Old England'. He attacked Jacobites for favouring a 'foreign Jurisdiction' (the Papacy) and titled continental monarchies the 'Grand Oppressor[s]', with France the main enemy.⁷⁵ He suggested extending the 'Blessing' of 'Whiggism' to 'our Brethren of Scotland and Ireland', meaning further political incorporation and colonisation. Other radical Whigs skewered the Jacobites' lack of 'Patriotism',

55. Toland 1726, 10–12, 15

56. Toland 1726, 52

57. Toland 1726, 106

58. Toland 1726, 83

59. Toland 1726, 83

60. Toland 1726, 4, 16, 75, 117

61. Toland 1726, 32

62. Toland 1726, 7, 98

63. Toland 1726, 6

64. Toland 1726, 17

65. Toland 1726, 22, 83

66. Toland 1726, 95

67. Toland 1726, ??

68. Toland 1726, 87

69. Toland 1726, 117, 132

70. Toland 1726, 59–60

71. Toland 1726, 141

72. Simms 1969

73. Kidd 1999, 225–6

74. Smyth 1993, 792

75. Molesworth 2011

and disparaged Ireland and its 'natives', Scotland, and 'Highlanders' while lauding the 'true Englishman'.⁷⁶

In the period after George I's accession (1714) and the Jacobite uprising Toland was confident about England's fate. But he continued to fear Gaelic uprisings and hoped to eliminate 'Popery' in England.⁷⁷ His *State-Anatomy of Great Britain* (1717), briefly touched upon 'Scotland and Ireland'. This work applauded the Scots' Protestant severity, but expressed fear that the Tories had encouraged 'Papists, nonjurors, and heathenish Highlanders'. He lauded the loyalism of Irish Protestants, while recognising their embattled minority status.⁷⁸ In this context, the *History's* juxtaposition between 'England' and its 'Celtic' outliers was of significant political import. Though the work espoused anti-clerical views which had been aimed at Anglican clergymen and English Tories, it temporarily made the 'Celts' (Man included) the epitome of 'Priestcraft'. It tallied with fears that modern Celtic regions endangered English liberties. As Molesworth put it, he and Toland were tackling 'Priests' masquerading as 'Historians'. Both were attempting to affect national politics in the late 1710s, and the *History's* geographic contrast dovetailed with contemporary hostilities.

Few modern historians have studied the patriotic prejudices of Toland's circle. Those defining its 'causes' as 'good'⁷⁹ have ignored those which are presumably bad. For aligning with 'modern' values, Toland's often 'unscrupulous' historical methods have been favoured over others' more 'logical', if still profoundly flawed, work on the Druids.⁸⁰ To see the *History* as theologically refined,⁸¹ representing a dualistic or a patriotic 'Celtic' identity,⁸² or practising ironic purposes⁸³ attributes too much sophistication to Toland. He was not challenging 'classical antiquity' because he attributed some architectural achievements to the Druids.⁸⁴ Nor was he implying that the Druids were worthy rhetoricians because he claimed Hercules as a Celt;⁸⁵ he defined the main body of Druids as attaining a 'perfection in Sophistry'. Though the *History's* third letter provided a 'quasi-Utopian'

image of life in the modern Hebrides,⁸⁶ Toland still impressed a critical line. He calls the Hebrideans 'unskilful' and beset by 'ignorance', with only their 'bountiful' resources and 'Temperance' aiding them.⁸⁷ The islands remain 'capable of improvement', rather than desirable to live in, and much remains too 'barbarous' for our 'modern ideas'.⁸⁸ There is no suggestion, furthermore, that Druidic survivals, rather than environmental conditions, are of any worth.

In the first letter, Toland briefly accepted that Irish 'Druid' society supported higher learning. But he observes that its institutions were 'slightly regarded',⁸⁹ and the scholars he identifies are praised for 'rejecting all the Druidical fables and idolatry'.⁹⁰ The argumentative context also undermines the notion of Druid learning. Toland builds the Druids up to illustrate their oppression by Christian priests, including book burnings of their 'useful' knowledge by Patrick (an argument without evidence).⁹¹ The ultimate point is to criticise Christian strictures, rather than to celebrate Druidic culture. If 'priestcraft' (now Christian) is briefly contrasted with learned Druidry, the latter identity is not sustained. He abandons, too, *Nazarenus's* portrait of Patrick and the 'Antient Irish' as harbingers of rational Christianity in *Nazarenus*.⁹² In the *History*, they played persecutors. In professing to discover 'Right Reason',⁹³ Toland had his actors implausibly switching roles.

Toland's other appreciations of 'Celts' in the *History* are backhanded and ironic. He praises one adventuring 'Druid', the legendary Arabis the Hyperborean, but Arabis appears exceptional, and his learning approximates to classical standards.⁹⁴ When Toland acknowledges the Druids' architectural achievements, he finds this most interesting because they sprang up in places 'remote, barren, and uncultivated'.⁹⁵ He suggests, elsewhere, that Scottish Druids were as 'learned and knowing' as present-day 'Highlanders are ignorant',⁹⁶ suggesting that a descent has occurred, but one without profound effect. At times, the arguments

76. Gordon and Trenchard 1747, 93, 158, 193, 199, 339–40

77. Toland 1718, xxiv

78. Toland 1717, 46–53

79. Robbins 2014, 127, and Daniel 1984, ch VI

80. Hutton 2009, 83. cf Daniel 1984, 91–93, 229

81. Daniel 1984, 222–9

82. O'Halloran 2004, 77

83. Champion 2001, 333, 337

84. Champion 2001, 333

85. Daniel 1984, 137

86. Champion 2001, 336

87. Toland 1726, 171–2, 175

88. Toland 1726, 173, 178–80

89. Toland 1726, 48–51

90. Toland 1726, 51

91. Toland 1726, 48–9

92. Toland 1718, preface, x, and 63

93. Toland 1718, 66

94. Toland 1726, 180–2. Arabis was, in Greek myth, from the legendary Hyperborea, which Toland identified with the Isle of Lewis

95. Toland 1726, 117

96. Toland 1726, 118

seem genuinely conflicting.⁹⁷ But criticising 'Celtic' religion remained dominant, with any praise marginal. The *History's* West Britons were only tactically invoked as rational religionists. There was irony in the persecuting Druids becoming the persecuted, and in these 'priestly' people being teachers. Only a present-day Anglophone writer and English readers could recognise these laudable features; if 'Celtic' society had rational aspects, these were fleeting. If the 'Celts' had any commonality with present-day England, it was in the latter's worst aspects.

It is in this context that we must see Toland's account of Man. As noted, the *History* maintains the similarity between specific 'Celtic' places, rendering an account of one an account of all. When he comes to Man, his tone is consistent. He primarily analyses material from Sacheverell's *Account*, although questions its interpretations. Where Sacheverell ascribes the deposits of stones on Man to geological forces, Toland (despite never visiting the island) confidently argues that these are Druid 'carn' monuments visible across Celtic parts.⁹⁸ Elsewhere, Man's name is included in summations listing Druidic rock piles.⁹⁹ After this evidencing of the Druids' dominance, Toland discusses the 'Mannian nation' generally. Here, he quotes (without attribution) Sacheverell's addendum writer Brown on its many 'surprising revolutions', while ignoring Brown's central arguments against the Druids being in Man, and his conclusion that they came from the East. Toland affirms, however, Sacheverell's position that the laudable 'Breast-Laws' are 'undoubted' Druid 'remains'. He concedes the Druids' renown for legal acuity, but maintains that they are 'Imposters' and 'tyrannical' in a wider scheme.¹⁰⁰ Their legality was an 'appearance', an illusion which still leads the 'Mankmen' to venerate the Druids today (a judgment again embellishing secondary sources). We can see Manx history and historiography being pruned, therefore, to fit a mould. Whereas Sacheverell regarded Man's Druids as worthy, Toland made them fit a 'priestly' stereotype.

The *History* also criticises Sacheverell regarding Man's earliest rulers. Toland sanctions him, firstly, regarding Mannanan-Mac-Lear. Sacheverell is guilty, apparently, of merely retelling that Mannanan was the 'Father, Founder, and Legislator of their Country'.¹⁰¹ In fact, Sacheverell

was dubious even of this, reporting it as what the Manx 'believe'. Toland, by contrast, inserts an extended history. He reports that Mannanan is commonly thought to be descended from 'Lir', but was truthfully the son of 'Alladius', a Druid. He relates details of Mannanan's life and death.¹⁰² Toland cites no sources at this point, although his accounts matches that of Roderick O'Flaherty's *Ogygia* (1685),¹⁰³ a work he referenced elsewhere. O'Flaherty's histories incorporated numerous myths and legends. 'Mannanan' was the subject of various Irish stories, each with dubious footings in reality. Blundell and Sacheverell, among other English historians, identified him as a largely mythical creation. The eldest Irish texts cast Mannanan variously as a merchant and deity, and son of Lear. It was only a twelfth-century account of Mannanan-Mac-Lear that imagined *four* Mannanans. Two, the sons Lear and Allot, were apparently Druids, though Allot and his son were situated in Arran.¹⁰⁴ Yet Toland confidently writes of 'the Republic of Mannanan' on Man, one constituted in union with Druid priests, who made him (by 'report') a 'consummate Magician'. He builds upon shaky foundations, but draws extensive conclusions: Mannanan becomes Man's founder, someone venerated there today. The present-day Manx seem to uphold priestly traditions.

Toland later notes Man as the preeminent location where 'a peculiar Government was set up by [the Druids'] procurement or approbation'. Mannanan was, apparently, an 'admirable Legislator'. Although some Irish manuscripts speculated on a political government by Mannanan, these mostly, like Toland's *History*, embellished upon earlier sources.¹⁰⁵ On the topic of Druid monarchy, Toland mentions another in the Hebrides, which was initially elective and egalitarian.¹⁰⁶ Toland argues, after consulting several learned 'friends', however, that it was in fact a corrupt, illiberal state which encouraged superstition. He cites ancient authorities for the opinion that the Druidic 'Priests' always manipulated secular princes, and then attributes this condition to Hebridean government.¹⁰⁷ Though running away from Man, the pattern is clear: Druidic society tended towards cruelty and ignorance. Sources are critiqued based on conformity to this thesis. Toland rejects, therefore, Sacheverell's *Account* and histories of Jersey and the Western Isles for not recognising Druid

97. cf Nye 1700, 6–7

98. Toland 1726, 64

99. Toland 1726, 62

100. Toland 1726, 64–5

101. Toland 1726, 66–7

102. Toland 1726, 66

103. cf O'Flaherty 1793, 26–7

104. Macquarrie 2015, 292–4

105. Macquarrie 2015, 297–8

106. Toland 1726, 152

107. Toland 1726, 152–4

barbarities, while deferring to ancient authors, despite acknowledging their distance from the 'northern peoples'.¹⁰⁸ Manx history is constructed by these means, along with the 'Celtic' region generally.

The *History's* specific references to Man are sparse, but Toland maintains the association of all 'Celtic' parts. Man is named as a community reverencing May Day, a purported Druidic festival, as the Highlanders do. Each belong to a 'Celtic off-spring' who continue to practise superstitious rites.¹⁰⁹ Other attempts to draw Man in are even more artificial: after a lengthy study of Druidic monuments in Wales, Ireland, and the Scottish islands, Toland concludes by affirming that Man 'does no less abound in these Monuments'. They only await being 'visited' and 'examined'.¹¹⁰ He later states that he is 'passionately desirous to spend one summer in those Ilands' before publishing the *History*.¹¹¹ Yet the conclusion – that Man is one of many Celtic backwaters – had been established in advance.

Little of Manx 'history' is revealed here. Each 'Celtic' part is used to illustrate a Druidic theme. Toland attributes 'priestcraft' to a Gallic, Celtic, Druidic fringe and insinuates its difference from Gothic England. He did not perform a bloodless display of 'erudition and eloquence';¹¹² he traduced specific regions of Britain. Toland's ultimate quarrel was with 'priestcraft' rather than Man or the Celts, but he characterises these communities through this lens. Man, at this time, represented a relative low-key problem for England. Yet Toland brings it into a category with Scotland and Ireland, entertaining the prospect that it might contradict England's wishes. Toland knew little of the ructions of Manx government, including the ongoing conflicts regarding the rights of the church. He provided ballast, however, to the view of many Englishmen that border regions within the British archipelago were subversive forces. The notion of a hostile Man was somewhat novel, and his appreciation of Manx Druidry clearly contradicted previous historians, while adding information about their monuments. In these regards, Toland established a new approach.

Toland's inclusion of Man amongst the 'Celts' was not entirely new. But our current notion of six 'Celtic' nations is relatively modern. For much of

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'Scottish, Irish and Welsh antiquaries advanced their [...] patriotic shibboleths without any sense of a common "Celtic" identity or interest.'¹¹³ The idea of a truly 'pan-Celticist identity' only came with the nineteenth century.¹¹⁴ Aside from dividing the nations of Britain, most historians and theologians sought to 'demonstrat[e] the affiliation of Celts and Saxons'.¹¹⁵ Those attempting more precise definitions mostly divided the 'Celts' into a Goidelic group – Gaels, though rarely mentioning Man – and the Brythonic Celts of Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany.¹¹⁶ For some, the 'Celt' was narrowly defined as one from Gaul,¹¹⁷ whereas others placed them atop a family spanning Western Europe.¹¹⁸

In Toland's time, developments were occurring. Breton Paul-Yves Pezron's *The Antiquities of Nations* (1703, trans 1706) spread the idea that the ancient 'Britons' and 'Gauls' descended from the 'Celts'.¹¹⁹ Welsh scholar Edward Lhuyd, a contemporary of Toland's who knew him at Oxford, researched what he called the 'Celtic' languages (Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Breton, Cornish, and Manx), which accord with our modern categories. He published his findings in *Archaeologica Britannia* (1707). Lhuyd may have been the first to subsume Manx under this category. Toland owned both Pezron's and Lhuyd's works,¹²⁰ so we can see where he may have gained inspiration. Though Lhuyd (and Toland) were 'far from creating a pan-Celtic identity',¹²¹ its emergence is apparent. Lhuyd and Pezron still maintained that Celts and Germans were part of the same branch of peoples, and 'eighteenth-century Gothicism' continued to find place for the Celts as a friendly and related people.¹²² Toland, pushing the view that 'the Celtic and the Gothic, which have been often taken for each other, are as different as Latin and Arabic',¹²³ appears an outlier. But he anticipated nineteenth century views on the irreconcilable nature of the 'Goths' and 'Celts' (which used Druids as one marker of distinction).¹²⁴ The inclusion of a distinct 'Manx' people and language in the 'Celtic' world, too, marked a significant step.

113. Kidd 1999, 186

114. Kidd 1999, 62, 207–8

115. Kidd 1999, 72, 187ff

116. Kidd 1999, 188

117. On Toland, see Harrison 1996, 256

118. Kidd 1999, 189

119. Kidd 1999, 67

120. Champion 1999, 307

121. Kidd 1999, 196–7

122. Kidd 1999, 197–9, and 215, 236

123. Toland 1726, 7

124. Kidd 1999, 208

108. Toland 1726, 148

109. Toland 1726, 69–70, 73–4

110. Toland 1726, 118

111. Toland 1726, 145

112. Champion 2001, 338

The last of the Manx Druids

What of the Manx Druids after Toland? Between stressing paganism and Christianity and sagacity and barbarism, British views about the Druids were not homogenous. This remained the case for Man. The Druids do not appear in Bishop Wilson's 'History', included in the 1722 edition of *Britannia*. They did not, perhaps, meet his ecclesiastical or historiographical standards. English customs official George Waldron's *Description of the Isle of Man* (1726) faintly touched upon the Druids. This worked railed at the Manx clergy and community, but offered only the 'Conjecture' that Manx churches replaced older stone temples where, in 'Days of Ignorance, the Priests stood upon, to deliver their fabulous Oracles.'¹²⁵ Like Toland, Waldron speculated that the rocky deposits at Manx mountains had their origins in human superstitions. But to Waldron, these 'rude Mausoleums' were created by centuries of Manxmen throwing earth on the sites to honour their former kings.¹²⁶ The D-word goes unmentioned.

Other scholars continued the study of Druidic cairns. Like Toland, they sometimes adopted a critical perspective: the antiquarian Francis Grose, who produced several popular works, regarded it as certain that Man was home to the 'remains of Druidical superstition' in 1774.¹²⁷ John Feltham's *Tour Through the Isle of Man, in 1797 and 1798* assumed that the Druids governed in Man, and on this basis he attributed various stone monuments which he had seen to them.¹²⁸ Fellow visitor George Woods's *Account of the Past and Present State of the Isle of Man* (1811) stressed the Druids' presence quietly, but admitted that some stone circles were 'probably of Druidical antiquity'.¹²⁹ Woods firmly affirmed the idea that the Druids were 'bloody tyrants' who 'retained' power into the Christian period.¹³⁰

Poets of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, including Wordsworth and Blake, often painted the Druids in sinister terms.¹³¹ Cornish clergyman Richard Polwhele, in a lyric devoted to Bishop Wilson in 1781, portrayed them as brutal practitioners of human sacrifice whom Christianity had mercifully swept away, but whose

'crumbling piles' remained.¹³² Manx resident and journalist Thomas John Ouseley published several poems in *Mona's Isle* (1853). One narrated an 'Arch Druid', driven by 'Gross Superstition', committing a human sacrifice at Glen Darragh, giving the idea renewed specificity. For Ouseley, the Druid besmirched this otherwise 'fair isle'.¹³³ In a similar vein, poems in the anonymous *Legends and Recollections of Mona* (1849), invoked the Druids' 'dark rites' over Man's now 'moss-grown cairns'.¹³⁴

Some writers followed Toland's methods and narrative. Scottish antiquarian Joseph Train's *Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man* (1845) recapitulated the view that the Druids formed Man's 'first government' and began oral transmitting the breast laws.¹³⁵ He introduced new speculations, claiming that the Manx Lammas Day derived from one of 'the four great festivals of the Druids'.¹³⁶ Elsewhere, he thought Man's Governor receiving a white staff upon his installation was a probable Druid survival, because it accorded with their 'symbolical philosophy'.¹³⁷ Train refers to Toland on several occasions, regretting that he did not visit the island.¹³⁸ At times, he cited Toland's analysis of *other* sites on the British Isles to understand Manx history. Cairns, for example, identified by Toland in the Orkneys are used to illustrate possibilities in Man.¹³⁹ In a like manner, he cited other historians' ruminations on Druidic government, assuming this applicable to Man, where 'History' is often 'silent'.¹⁴⁰ He suggested that Druid rituals involving wheels (another fabulous idea) resembled the Manx triskelion.¹⁴¹ Such speculations followed Toland's approach. Unlike Toland, however, Train had visited the island, and described several burial sites, including those at Meayll Hill and Glen Darragh, erroneously identifying these as Druid monuments.¹⁴²

These archaeological musings and poetic flourishes aside, many histories of Man maintained the idea of the Druids' positive rule. Broader histories of Britain continued to celebrate the Druids, without necessarily examining their stone monuments. One traveller to the island, David Robertson, had evidently read his Sacheverell,

125. Waldron 1744, 21–2

126. Waldron 1744, 115

127. Harrison 1871, 153

128. Feltham 1861, 36, 156, 173, 214

129. Woods 1811, 120

130. Woods 1811, 180–1

131. Owen 1962, ch 7

132. Polwhele 1792, 6–11

133. Ouseley 1853, 83–90

134. Anonymous 1849, 13

135. Anonymous 1849, 185, 204

136. Train 1845, 120

137. Train 1845, 193

138. Train 1845, 31

139. Train 1845, 25, 57

140. Train 1845, 275

141. Train 1845, 144

142. Train 1845, 26–8

while seeming to ignore Brown. His *Tour through the Isle of Man* (1794) judged it plausible that Druids fled to Anglesey and then Man, fleeing persecution each time.¹⁴³ As per Rowlands, Robertson married Tacitus' account of Anglesey with Boece's erroneous extrapolation from it. Robertson recapitulated the view that the Druids created a seat of learning in Man. They were 'sacred and venerable legislators', who adopted Christianity because it 'resembled, but infinitely surpassed' their religion.¹⁴⁴ Their philosophy was 'enlightened and humane', and the people cheerfully obeyed them; Robertson chides the opposite view.¹⁴⁵ Again, he affirms links between Manx secrecy about the common law and veneration towards the Deemsters with Druidism.¹⁴⁶

Fellow travel writer Nathaniel Jefferys followed this line in *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Isle of Man* (1809).¹⁴⁷ Like Toland, though perhaps not under his influence, he noted that the Druids 'increased the number of their temples, and governed the people' on Man after fleeing Anglesey.¹⁴⁸ Hannah Bullock, an English migrant to Man, wrote in 1816 of the 'undoubted proof [of Manx Druids]; not only in the many vestiges remaining, but also in those peculiar features of their laws and customs, still extant.'¹⁴⁹ Following Boece, various Scottish kings are said to have 'received their education under the Druids of Man';¹⁵⁰ various stone monuments are classed as 'druidical vestiges'.¹⁵¹ She drew parallels with the Deemsters again,¹⁵² although interpreted them as being driven out by Patrick, rather than converting willingly.¹⁵³ Different axes continued to be explored.

The tradition of seeing the Druids as Man's governors and constructors of monuments died hard. An editor of Sacheverell's text in 1859, JG Cumming, confirmed the earlier author's view that Man, rather than Anglesey, was the Druids' seat.¹⁵⁴ The novelist Hall Caine, in 1891, was more circumspect: he regarded the Druids' former presence as 'clear from many Celtic names and some remains, such as we are accustomed to call

Druidical, and certain customs still observed.'¹⁵⁵ Spencer Walpole, a Lieutenant Governor on Man from 1892–93, concluded his debate in *The Land of Home Rule* by arguing that in light of the consensus among historians, 'Druidism must almost necessarily have existed in Man'. But he noted criticism of the attribution of stone circles to them. He called it 'probable' that they retreated to Man from Anglesey, given that this was a common strategy; and an 'inherent probability' that many customs could be traced to the Druids.¹⁵⁶ This sounded quite guarded.

In addition to this caution, some scholars rebuked incoming discoveries. One British antiquarian, Reverend EL Barnwell, blasted any association between Manx stone monuments and the Druids (or 'the term "Druidical"') in an 1866 archaeological study.¹⁵⁷ But when John Rhys, a Professor of Celtic at Cambridge, found the Ogam stone bearing the words DOVAIDONA MAQI DROATA (now in the Manx Museum) in 1890 he read it as 'Dovaido, son of Druid'. Rhys felt that it settled the 'question' of their being Druids in the island. He proceeded to speculations on Druidical influences in Man, consonant with their acceptance of Christianity.¹⁵⁸ Fellow Celtic scholar Whitley Stokes quickly disputed Rhys's claim, calling the translation an 'impossible' form in Gaelic.¹⁵⁹ Reflecting this caution, the stone is now thought to read simply 'Dovaido, son of Droata'.

Holiday guides still propounded the place of 'Druidical remains',¹⁶⁰ but the net seemed to be closing. Native son and Methodist minister WT Radcliffe, in *Ellan Vannin* (1895), proceeded with scepticism, noting that there are no direct references to Druids in Man, only a likelihood that the Druids given their dispersion throughout Britain. He concluded: 'On the whole, some might hold that the alleged ruins are wanting in the specific marks of Druidism, and that it was late in the centuries (about the sixteenth) before any writer favoured a Druidic era.' He only allowed that some 'shadows of the system seem to linger in Man', and 'some probabilities remain' that Man shared the Druidic religion of the rest of the Isles.¹⁶¹ AW Moore's towering *History of the Isle of Man* (1900) made only scant reference to the Druids, noting their presence in the surrounding Isles, and refraining to

143. Robertson 1794, 102

144. Robertson 1794, 103, 164–5

145. Robertson 1794, 99–100

146. Robertson 1794, 43–4

147. Jefferys 1809, 40

148. Jefferys 1809, 82–3

149. Bullock 1816, 4

150. Bullock 1816, 43

151. Bullock 1816, 215, 237

152. Bullock 1816, 45

153. Bullock 1816, 4

154. Sacheverell 1859, 140

155. Caine 1891, 57

156. Walpole 1893, 19–20

157. Barnwell 1866, 60

158. Rhys 1890

159. Stokes 1890

160. Anonymous 1895

161. Radcliffe 1895, ch 3

speculate on the length or manner of their government.¹⁶² Indeed, Moore regarded it likelier that Gaelic, polytheistic Celts predominated in Man, with only tangential influence by Irish Druids.¹⁶³ Interestingly, Moore was an attendee at Pan-Celtic Congresses during this period, as well as a Welsh Eisteddfod in 1899. The latter formed a nucleus for modern Druidism, and Moore was conferred with the 'Bardic degree of Druid' for his services to Celtic Literature.¹⁶⁴ As Celtic organisations increasingly looked favourably upon 'their' Druid heritage, this was again projected back into Man. Moore, however, did not feel comfortable affirming their presence.

The notion that the Druids were in Man has lacked credence in recent historical and archaeological research. Hall Caine, in 1909, re-examined many Druidical possibilities on Man, admitting that 'we have no reliable knowledge' of Druids in Man, nor 'any proof' that they built stone monuments. Most stories amounted to a 'pretty tale'.¹⁶⁵ William Cubbon's *Island Heritage* (1952) included an eighth-century Irish poem, *The Voyage of Bran*, which referenced Druids on Man, but held forth no further.¹⁶⁶ Many translations of *The Voyage* mention neither the Druids nor Man specifically – the identifications require guesswork¹⁶⁷ – and Cubbon perhaps knew of its poetic quality. RV Kinvig's *History* did not wax on the Druids' presence, and declared that stone age megalithic tombs were usually 'known by somewhat fanciful names as the Druid's Circle...'¹⁶⁸ consigning them to the place of myth. While the Druids continue to have a hold on popular consciousness, ideas about them are largely acknowledged to be modern inventions, and their presence in Manx historiography has faded.

Though the place of the Manx Druids has passed, this study has shown that they played an important part in early conceptions of Manx identity. They allowed historians to bring Man closer to Scotland, Britain, or the 'Celts'; or to stress Man's peculiar status and Druid survivals. Manxmen temporarily claimed the Druids for themselves, albeit in varied terms. Toland's *History* was a particularly significant in the middle part of this period. Our analysis has suggested that it provided a newly critical perspective on Manx history. In doing so, we

have challenged some interpretations of Toland's works. Toland also, importantly, brought Man into a pan-Celtic orbit.

After Toland, scholars and poets remained divided on the Druids' influence in Man. The idea receded altogether in the twentieth century. But the idea of Man as part of a non-Germanic Celtic world, its national culture combining 'Britishness and Celticism', continues today.¹⁶⁹ These conceptions came about through developments in the early modern period, however, rather than existing since the dawn of time. We do well to remember that such divisions, much like the 'Druids' (Manx or otherwise), were a recent invention.

Euan McArthur is a PhD student at the University of St Andrews, currently researching British historians' perspectives of the Isle of Man. He has previously published work on early Quakerism, and is interested in the political, intellectual, and ecclesiastical history of Man and the wider British Isles.

The author can be contacted at:

edm9@st-andrews.ac.uk

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3945-294X>

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to my doctoral supervisors (Colin Kidd and Jacqueline Rose); the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society and Culture Vannin for funding this wider project; Tim Grass and Frances Coakley, amongst other historians of Man, for their correspondence on a variety of matters; and my late mother, Christine (*née* Shimmin), for inspiring an early interest in the Island's history.

Note: the author received a Marshall Cubbon bursary from IoMNHAS in support of his research.

References

- Anonymous 1849. *Legends and Recollections of Mona, with Other Poems from a Family Portfolio*, H Brouard, Guernsey
- Anonymous c 1895. *Mona's Isle: A Holiday Trip to the Isle of Man*, FE Longley, London
- Barnwell, EL 1866. 'Notes on the Stone Monuments in the Isle of Man', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* **12**(45), 46–71
- Belchem, J 2000. 'Introduction', in Belchem (ed) *A New History of the Isle of Man, Volume V: The Modern Period*, Liverpool University Press, 1–18
- Blundell, W 1648–56 (1876/77). *A History of the Isle of Man*, (2 vols) repr vol 1 1876/ vol 2 1877, Manx Society **XXV** / **XXVII**, Douglas
- Boece, H 1821. *The History and Chronicles of Scotland*, I (trans by J Bellenden), W and C Tait, Edinburgh

162. Moore 1900, 42–3

163. Moore 1893, 10–11

164. Cubbon 1952, 323

165. Caine 1909, 21–7

166. Caine 1909, 2–3

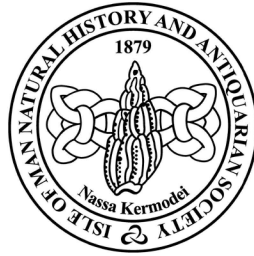
167. Macquarrie 2015, 287–8

168. Kinvig 1975, 23

169. Belchem 2000, 2

- Bullock, H 1816. *History of the Isle of Man*, Longman et al, London
- Caine, H 1891. *The Little Manx Nation*, Heinemann, London
- Caine, H 1909. *The Isle of Man*, Adam and Charles Black, London
- Champion, J 1999. 'Introduction', in J Toland, *Nazarenus*, 1–106, Voltaire Foundation, Oxford
- Champion, J 2001. 'John Toland, the druids, and the politics of Celtic scholarship', *Irish Historical Studies* 32(127), 321–342
- Cubbon W 1952. *Island Heritage*, G Falkner, Manchester
- Daniel, S 1984. *John Toland: His Methods, Manners, and Mind*, Queen's University Press, Kingston
- Daniel, S 2008. 'Toland, John (1670–1722)', in HCG Matthews and B Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* < <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-27497> > [pub 3 January 2008]
- Drayton, M 1695. *England's Heroical Epistles*, S Smethwick, London
- Feltham J, 1861. *Tour Through the Isle of Man, in 1797 and 1798*, repr 1861 Manx Society VI, Douglas
- Gordon T and Trenchard J, 1747. *The Independent Whig*, IV, J Peele, 1747, London
- Harrison, A 1996. 'John Toland's Celtic Background' in A Harrison, P McGuinness, and R Sullivan (eds) *John Toland's 'Christianity not Mysterious': Text, Associated Works and Critical Essays*, Lilliput, Dublin, 243–260
- Harrison, W (ed) 1871. *The Old Historians of the Isle of Man*, Manx Society XVIII, Douglas
- Hutton, R 2009. *Blood and Mistletoe: The History of the Druids in Britain*, Yale University Press, New Haven
- Jefferys, N 1809. *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Isle of Man*, Preston and Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Jones, I 1725. *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain*, D Brown et al, London
- Kearney, R 1997. *Postnationalist Ireland*, Routledge, London
- Kidd, C 1999. *British Identities before Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Kinvig, RH 1975. *A History of the Isle of Man*, Liverpool University Press
- Macquarrie, CW 2015. 'The Isle of Man in Medieval Gaelic Literature', in S Duffy and H Mytum (eds), *A New History of the Isle of Man: Volume III, The Medieval Period, 1000–1406*, Liverpool University Press, 281–304
- Milton, J 1695. *The History of Britain*, R Scott et al, London
- Molesworth, R 2011. Preface to *Franco-Gallia, or an Account of the Ancient Free State of France*, Liberty Fund, < <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/champion-an-account-of-denmark-with-francogallia-and-some-considerations-for-the-promoting-of-agriculture-and-employing-the-poor> >
- Moore, A W 1893. *Sodor and Man*, Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London
- Moore, A W 1900. *A History of the Isle of Man, I*, Manx Society, Douglas
- Nashe, T 1594. *The Terrors of the Night*, William Jones, London
- Nye, S 1700. *An Historical Account and Defence of the Canon*, J Darby, London
- O'Flaherty 1793. *Ogygia*, II (trans by J Hely), W M'Kenzie, Dublin
- O'Halloran, C 2004. *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, C.1750–1800*, Cork University Press, Cork
- Ouseley, T J 1849. *Mona's Isle, and Other Poems*, Woodfall and Kinder, London
- Owen, A L 1962. *The Famous Druids*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Piggott, S 1968. *The Druids*, Thames & Hudson, London
- Polwhele, R 1792. *Poems*, II, R Cruttwell, London
- Radcliffe, W T 1895. *Ellan Vannin*, Charles H Kelly, London
- Rhys, J 1890. *The Academy*, 954, 134
- Robbins, C 2014. *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA
- Robertson, D 1794. *A Tour through the Isle of Man*, E Hodson, London
- Rowlands, H 1766. *Mona Antiqua Restorata*, J Knox, London
- Sacheverell, W 1859. *An Account of the Isle of Man*, orig 1702 repr 1859 Manx Society I, Douglas
- Simms, J G 1969. 'John Toland (1670–1722), Donegal heretic', *Irish Historical Studies*, 16(63), 304–320
- Smyth, J 1993. "'Like Amphibious Animals": Irish Protestants, Ancient Britons, 1691–1707', *The Historical Journal*, 36(4), 785–797
- Stokes, W 1890. *The Academy* 955, 154
- Sullivan, R 1982. *John Toland and the Deist Controversy*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA
- Sullivan R 1998. 'John Toland's Druids: A Mythopoeia of Celtic Identity', *Bullán*, 4(1), 19–41
- Toland, J 1717. *State-Anatomy of Great Britain*, John Philips, London
- Toland, J 1718. *Nazarenus*, Letter 2, J Brotherton, J Roberts, and A Dodd, London
- Toland, J 1726. *A Collection of Several Pieces of Mr. John Toland*, J Peele, London
- Train, J 1845. *An Historical and Statistical Account of the Isle of Man*, II, W A Quiggin, Douglas
- Waldron, G 1744. *The History and Description of the Isle of Man*, W Bickerton, London (repr 1865 Manx Society XI, Douglas)
- Walpole, S 1893. *The Land of Home Rule*, Longman, Greens & Co., London
- Woods, G 1811. *An Account of the Past and Present State of the Isle of Man*, Robert Baldwin, London

Note: internet resources were all accessed November 2022



About the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society

The Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society was founded in 1879 by a small group of amateur scholars led by P M C Kermodel who was to serve the Society tirelessly until his death in 1932. Kermodel, a typical nineteenth-century polymath, was a distinguished natural history scholar (the logo above shows Nassa Kermodel, one of his discoveries) but his antiquarian interests became even better known, particularly his study of the outstanding series of Celtic and Norse cross-slabs of the Island culminating in his seminal book *Manx Crosses* (1907). As the Society grew in size and importance it played a significant role in the campaign to persuade the Government of the Isle of Man to establish the Manx Museum, an aim which was envisaged in the first Manx Museum and Ancient Monuments Act of 1886 (which commenced protection of the Island's monuments), and became reality in 1922.

In the words of the Society's constitution, the objects of IoMNHAS are 'the advancement of knowledge of Natural History and Human History and Cultural Development, especially in the Isle of Man and countries related thereto. The Society shall seek to promote its objects by practical investigations in the field, by the furthering of cultural and documentary studies, by lectures, by the issue of publications for the benefit of the public, and in other such ways as may be determined by the Committee.'

From its inception, the Society has arranged a series of summer excursions to sites of antiquarian or natural history interest, and winter meetings at which papers have been read covering these fields of study.

The publication of relevant papers advancing the academic disciplines covered by the Society has also been an important part of its work, through a succession of journals - the *Transactions* 1879 to 1882, *Yn Lioar Manninagh* (the Manx Book) 1880 to 1906, the *Proceedings* (1906 to 2013), and now *Isle of Man Studies* since 2014. All contain many contributions of lasting significance to Manx studies, and the excursion reports in these volumes provide a valuable snapshot of the condition of monuments and buildings. The Society also publishes monographs (most recently on Rushen Abbey), and previously published the *Manx Archaeological Survey, Peregrine* (1941-1976), and *The Antiquarian* (2009-2013).

The Society works to promote knowledge, awareness, and conservation of our Cultural, Natural and Built Heritage via diverse lectures, excursions, study visits to areas around the Irish Sea region, symposia and conferences. Members contribute to research, mainly on-Island but also in relation to wider research topics. The Society promotes collaborative research, and to encourage younger researchers offers up to two bursaries a year to students in full-time education whose research relates to Manx subjects within the Society's aims and objectives.

Membership is not limited to Manx residents, and the Society has a significant number of members resident in the British Isles and worldwide who are interested in matters Manx.

On the Society's web site www.manxantiquarians.com can be found:

- Further information about the Society
- Details of events organised by the Society
- Details of its publications
- Details of the Marshall Cubbon bursary scheme
- Membership details, including discounted rates for families and students in full-time education
- Contact details

News on the Society's events can also be found via the Society's Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/IsleOfManNaturalHistoryandAntiquarianSociety

New Light on Manx Keeills: an archaeological and architectural reassessment of the structural and material remains of medieval chapels on the Isle of Man <i>Andrew Johnson</i>	5
Early Bronze Age Stone Battle-Axes and Axe-hammers of the Isle of Man <i>Amber Roy</i>	29
“Shee was the wysest woman in this lande” Margaret Quane (1616) <i>Stephen Miller</i>	39
Neolithic street lighting, Christian symbolism or sexual metaphor: the use of quartz in the Manx vernacular built environment <i>Patricia Tutt</i>	53
The Revival of Traditional Songs and Music in the Isle of Man <i>George Broderick</i>	69
‘In medio duorum animalium’, the ‘Habakkuk motif’: carved images for ‘recognising’ Christ on Viking-Age Manx sculpture as an icon in the search for Redemption <i>Ross Trench-Jellicoe</i>	85
‘Extinct’ Manx Butterflies <i>Garry Curtis</i>	127
John Toland and the Druids on the Isle of Man <i>Euan McArthur</i>	133
Manaw of the Britons: The Pre-Viking Kings of the Isle of Man <i>Ben Guy</i>	145
Bishop Hill’s Cathedral of 1886 <i>Peter Litman</i>	162
‘Kione Speiney’ or ‘Kione Spaine’y’ - the conundrum of ‘Spanish Head’? <i>George Broderick</i>	171
Reviews	
<i>The Island of Extraordinary Captives</i> by Simon Parkin, reviewed by Yvonne Cresswell	176
<i>Barbed wire university</i> by Dave Hannigan, reviewed by Alan Franklin	178
<i>Clarke, Petit and St Mark’s</i> by Philip Modiano, reviewed by Katie King	179
<i>Favourite of Fortune</i> by Andrew Bond, Frank Cowin, and Andrew Lambert, reviewed by Matthew Richardson	181
<i>Spring Tides</i> by Fiona Gell, reviewed by Andrew Brand	181
Recent accessions and developments at the Manx Museum	184
Society Business	
The Society in 2021 and 2022	194
Excursions	196
Obituary - Sandra Bolton	224

