

*Homage de l'autre
G.H. Doble.
12 Mar 1925.*

SAINT BUDOC

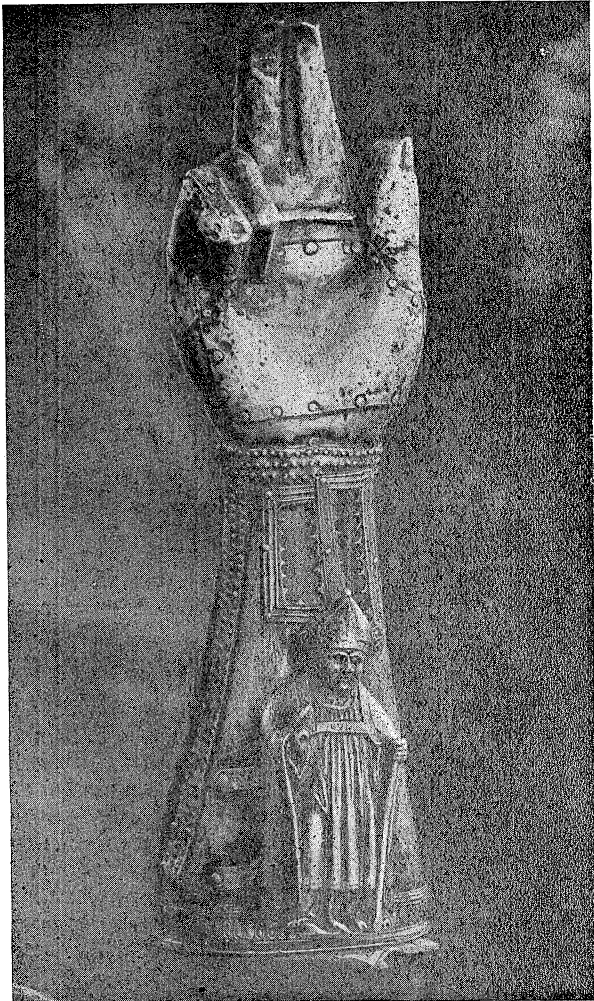
A CORNISH SAINT.



By the

Rev. G. H. DOBLE.

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SAINT BUDOC.

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A sermon preached in S. Budock parish church on 16th November, 1924, being Budock Feast Sunday, by the Revd. G. H. Doble, M.A., curate of Redruth, Examining Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Truro.

The frontispiece is a photograph of the silver reliquary containing the arm of S. Budoc, preserved in the church of Plourin ("Saints de Bretagne," Collection E. Hamonic.)



S. BUDOC,

Bishop and Confessor.

And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.
Ex. 2: 10.

It was probably from the similarity between the later Breton name for Budoc—*Beuzec*—and the Breton word *beuzi*, which means *drown*, that the well-known story about the birth of S. Budoc grew up. It is first found in the "Chronicle of S. Brieuc" (before 1420.) Budoc's mother was the beautiful and holy Azenor, daughter of the king of Brest, where one of the great towers of the castle still bears her name. Her hand was sought in marriage by the king of Goëlle (the district round Tréguier.) Some time afterwards her father, while hunting, was bitten by a serpent, which

fastened on his bare arm and hung there, draining all the life-blood of its victim. Azenor came, and, to deliver her father from the serpent, anointed her breast with oil and milk. The serpent left her father and sprung at Azenor, fixing its fangs in her breast, which she cut off with a sharp knife and flung, together with the serpent, into the flames. To reward her for her filial piety, God healed Azenor, and gave her a breast of gold. Her father had married again. Azenor's step mother was jealous of her. She revealed to the king of Goëlle the secret of the golden breast, and falsely accused Azenor of infidelity to her husband. The virtuous Azenor in vain protested her innocence. She was placed in a cask, which was thrown into the sea and drifted away down the English Channel. Azenor, putting her whole trust in God, Who protects the righteous, invoked the aid of her patron saint Brigit—the favourite female saint of Celtic Christianity, "the Mary of the Gael." (This detail is a proof that the legend is a fairly early one.) Soon a bright light shone in the dark cask, and the angel of the Lord, who "tarrieth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them" (Ps. 34: 7) appeared, comforting her, bringing her food and bidding her eat. Each day he came, while the cask continued to drift West and North towards the shores of Ireland, and with him Azenor often saw S. Brigit appear. After five months a little boy was born in the cask. His mother took him in her arms, made the sign of the cross over him, and prayed to God. No sooner had she finished her prayer than the Lord opened the mouth of the new-born babe, and he said "Be of good cheer, dear mother, we have nothing to fear, God is with us, we are near the end of our

voyage and the assistance the angel promised us is at hand." Shortly afterwards the sound of the waves lapping against the cask ceased, and Azenor knew that they had come to land. It was the coast of Ireland, close to the abbey of Beau Port, near Waterford. A villager saw something on the shore and ran down to it, thinking it was a barrel of wine. He was just going to drive a gimlet into it, when he heard a child's voice from within bid him have a care. He ran back to tell the Abbot of Beau Port, who came down with several of his monks, opened the cask, and found a beautiful woman and a little baby smiling and kissing its hand to them. The child was baptized next day, and given the name of Beuzec, because he was found in the water. His mother earned her living as a washer-woman in the village, and the child grew up in the abbey school.

Meanwhile the wicked step-mother at Brest fell ill. Realising that she was going to die, and seeing the mouth of hell yawning to receive her, she confessed that she had falsely accused Azenor. The king of Goëlle, in despair at the terrible consequences of his rash suspicions and hasty judgement, took ship and set out to seek the wife he had wronged. After long searching, he came to the Irish coast, and at last found his wife and child. He died, however, before they could return to Brittany. Azenor and Budoc remained at Beau Port, and Azenor died there. Budoc had now grown up. He became a priest and a monk in the abbey of Beau Port, and on the death of the abbot was chosen to succeed him. The people of that part of Ireland, knowing his royal birth, made him by force Archbishop and

Prince. But not long after, despairing of ever being able to civilize his barbarous flock, he resolved to secretly leave the island and return to Brittany. Finding no ship ready, he embarked on a stone coffin, was quickly wafted over the sea, and landed near Brest, at Porspoder, where the parish church is now dedicated to him. He remained a year at Porspoder, preaching, and converting heretics and idolaters. Then he moved a little further inland, to Plourin, a league away, where he built a chapel and hermitage. (This is the country which had been evangelised by S. Paul Aurelian, patron saint of Paul—another link between Brittany and Cornwall.) The people of Plourin regard Budoc as their first rector, but their ancestors found their rector too plain-spoken. Irritated at his censure of their vices, they resolved to slay him, and, to avoid bringing on them the guilt of such a crime, he left Plourin and went eastwards to S. Pol de Leon, and from there to Dol. The archbishop of Dol, S. Magloire, was at this very moment thinking of resigning his see and spending the rest of his days in retirement. He persuaded Budoc to take his place. For twenty years S. Budoc was Archbishop of Dol, though his biographers tell us nothing about his life during those years, except that (according to the Chronicle of Dol) he went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and returned with the cup our Saviour used at the Last Supper. He died on 8th December, which was observed as his festival in Brittany, in Cornwall, and at Exeter, until the introduction of the festival of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin, when S. Budoc's day was changed to 18th November. Angels were seen carrying his soul to heaven with melodious music. His body was buried in the

choir of the cathedral of Dol, but one of his hands and part of one of his arms are still preserved in a beautiful and ancient silver reliquary at Plourin.

Such is the legend of S. Budoc, as it was finally elaborated. It is one of the most charming legends in Breton hagiography, but it is nothing more than a legend. Now what do we know for certain about S. Budoc?

Budoc is a Pan-Celtic saint. He came from Ireland to Cornwall—such is the Cornish tradition, preserved by Leland (1533). "This Budocus was an Irish man, and came into Cornewalle, and there dwelled." (The Cornish tradition thus justifies the introduction of Ireland into his legend.) The cult of S. Budoc is found all over the ancient Damnonia (Devon and Cornwall)—at Budock (formerly Pluvuthack): at Budock Vean (Little Budoc) on the Helford River, in the parish of Constantine: at S. Budeaux near Plymouth: at Budoc's Ottery, and possibly at Bude and Bideford. In the Middle Ages there was a church of S. Budoc at Oxford. His cult extends over the whole of the West and North coasts of Brittany. There was certainly a bishop of Dol called Budoc—he is mentioned in the Life of S. Magloire in 848. The name Budoc was not uncommon in Brittany in the 11th century. A knight called Budioc died near Dol in 1095, and a Budoc appears as a witness to a charter at Redon in 1021. The memory of S. Budoc was preserved especially in the islands off Paimpol which formed an enclave of the bishopric of Dol. The author of the Life of S. Winwaloe, written

before 884, represents Budoc as a venerated teacher—"an angelic minister, richly endowed with learning, conspicuous for righteousness, whom all people of that time regarded as a bulwark of the Faith and a most firm pillar of the Church," dwelling in the island of Laurea (near the Ile de Bréhat) where Winwaloe was brought up from childhood as his pupil. On the other hand, in the ancient Life of S. Maudez, Bothmael and Tudy are introduced as pupils of S. Maudez in the Ile Modez (also close to the Ile de Bréhat). Budmael is the complete form of the name Budoc; *boudi* in old Celtic means *victory* and *profit*—it appears in the name of the British queen Boudicca, mis-read Boadicea. It is as Budmael that S. Budoc is invoked in the very ancient Litany of S. Vouga.

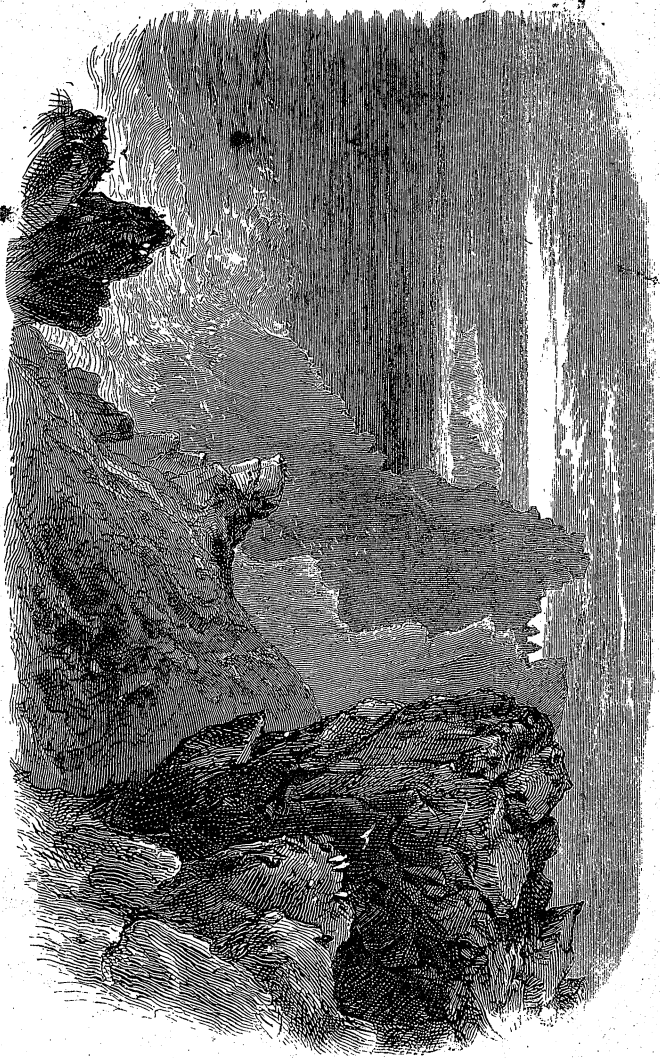
It is possible that there was another S. Budoc in the West of Brittany, because the cult of S. Beuzec is found in Leon at Plourin and Porspoder, and in Cornouaille at Beuzec-cap-Sizun, at Les-veuzec in the same parish, at Tre-veuzec in Plouhinec, at St. Beuzec in Concarneau, at Parc-bras-Beuzec in Plomeur, at Tregarven, at Beuzec-Conq, and the ancient parish church of Beuzec-cap-caval. At Goulin, near Beuzec-cap-Sizun, are the holy well and convent of S. Azenor, and in the Church of Plogoff, close by, a 16th century capital represents her with her new-born baby in the cask. S. Azenor was also patron of the church of Languengar near Lesneven: it is now destroyed, but two fountains of S. Azenor remain. It is possible that she may be the patron of Zennor in Cornwall.

We may picture Budock in the 6th century as a little group of beehive huts, surrounded by an enclosure, grouped round a tiny stone church (like S. Piran's oratory at Perranzabulo) on the site of which now stands the parish church of Budock. There is a well and a stone cross. The huts are the cells of monks who have come to study with the famous teacher Budoc. He is an earnest and cultured man, he wears a white tunic, at his side is a wallet containing a beautifully illuminated psalter or church service-book. In one hand he carries a short staff with a head like that of a spade, in the other a large bell like a cow-bell. You are struck as you look at him by his Celtic tonsure—the front of his head is shaved from ear to ear. He and his monks get their living by cultivating the glebe land round their settlement. Great part of their time is spent in manual labour, several hours are spent in prayer and church services, and several in reading and copying books. They "keep under their bodies" with fasting and self-denial, and when Budoc stays at Budoc Vean he often spends hours up to his neck in the cold waters of the Helford river reciting psalms. He visits his settlement on the Tamar from time to time, and sometimes crosses to Brittany.

Such was our patron saint. Let us keep the faith he brought here, and "be imitators of him, as he was of Christ." Let us hold fast to our old Cornish traditions, let us cherish the memory of the Cornish saints.



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THE LIZARD.