

Sample extract from Chapter 1, p.27

If the historical Arthur was therefore a figment created from the imagination of some Welsh monk scribbling away in a draughty monastery, what about his multiple connections with Cornwall? Geoffrey of Monmouth did not set Arthur's birth or locate his court in Cornwall, although in his tale Arthur was conceived and died there. Twelfth century Welsh sources, on the other hand, did associate Arthur's court with Celliwic, variously identified with Callywith/Castle Canyke at Bodmin, Killibury near Wadebridge and Domelioc. (An older equation with Callington has now been comprehensively rejected.) Meanwhile, in the Welsh tale of *Culhwch ac Olwen*, the magical Arthur pursued the giant boar *Twrch Trwyth* to Cornwall. Cornwall also features in Arthur's chats with a talking eagle. From the same sources we learn that one of Arthur's mother's relations was the 'son of the chief elder of Cornwall' while the Cornish *Gerent ap Erbin*, who we'll meet again later, was supposedly a warrior in Arthur's warband. But all the Welsh sources post-date the purported 'real' Arthur by half a millennium and may be telling us more about how Cornwall was regarded in the eleventh or twelfth centuries than what had been going on in the fifth and sixth.