

## 200 to 299

### **Septimus Severus Emperor 193-211**

#### **c200** Historia Augusta The Three Gordians

He (Gordian the Elder) served his quaestorship most splendidly. When he was aedile he gave the Roman people twelve exhibitions, that is one for each month, at his own expense; at times, indeed, he provided five hundred pairs of gladiators, and never less than a hundred and fifty. He produced a hundred wild beasts of Libya at once, and likewise at one time a thousand bears. There exists also today a remarkable wild-beast hunt of his, pictured in Gnaeus Pompey's "House of the Beaks"; this palace belonged to him and to his father and grandfather before him until your privy-purse took it over in the time of Philip. In this picture at the present day are contained two hundred stags with antlers shaped like the palm of a hand, together with stags of **Britain**, thirty wild horses, a hundred wild sheep, ten elks, a hundred Cyprian bulls, three hundred red Moorish ostriches, thirty wild asses, a hundred and fifty wild boars, two hundred chamois, and two hundred fallow deer. And all these he handed over to the people to be killed on the day of the sixth exhibition that he gave.

#### **208** Cassius Dio Cocceianus

Severus, seeing that his children were departing from their accustomed modes of life and that his legions were becoming enervated by idleness, set out on a campaign against **Britain**, though he knew that he should not return. He knew this chiefly from the stars under which he had been born, for he had them painted upon the ceilings of the two halls in the palace where he was wont to hold court. Thus they were visible to all, save the portion which "regarded-the-hour" when he first saw the light. This he had not engraved in the same way in both the rooms.--He knew it also by the report of the seers. And a thunderbolt struck a statue of his standing near the gates through which he intended to march out and looking off along the road leading to his destination, and it had erased three letters from his name. For this reason, as the seers indicated, he did not come back again but departed from life two years after this. He took with him very great sums of money.

There are two principal races of the **Britons**,--the Caledonians and the Maeatians. The titles of the rest have all been reduced to these two. The Maeatians live near the cross wall which cuts the island in two, and the Caledonians are behind them. Both inhabit wild and waterless mountains, desolate and swampy plains, holding no walls, nor cities, nor tilled fields, but living by pasturage and hunting and a few fruit trees. The fish, which are inexhaustible and past computing for multitude, they do not taste. They dwell coatless and shoeless in tents, possess their women in common, and rear all the offspring as a community. Their form of government is mostly democratic and they are very fond of plundering.

Consequently they choose their boldest spirits as leaders. They go into battle on chariots with small, swift horses. There are also infantry, very quick at running and very firm in standing their ground. Their weapons are shield and short spear, with a bronze apple attached to the end of the ground-spike, so that when the instrument is shaken it may clash and inspire the enemy with terror. They also have daggers. They can endure hunger and cold and any kind of wretchedness. They plunge into the swamps and exist there for many days with only their heads above water, and in the forests they support themselves upon bark and roots and in all cases they have ready a kind of food of which a piece the size of a bean when eaten prevents them from being

either hungry or thirsty. Of such a nature is the island of **Britain**, and such are the inhabitants that the enemy's country has. For it is an island, and the fact (as I have stated) was clearly proved at this time. The length of it is seven thousand one hundred and thirty-two stades. Its greatest breadth is two thousand three hundred and ten, and its least is three hundred.

Of all this we hold a little less than a half. So Severus, desiring to subjugate the whole of it, invaded **Caledonia**. While traversing the territory he had untold trouble in cutting down the forests, reducing the levels of heights, filling up the swamps, and bridging the rivers. He fought no battle and beheld no adversary in battle array. The enemy purposely put sheep and cattle in front of them for the soldiers to seize, in order that the latter might be deceived for a longer time and wear themselves out. The Romans received great damage from the streams and were made objects of attack when they were scattered. Afterward, being unable to walk, they were slain by their own friends to avoid capture, so that nearly as many as fifty thousand died.

But the emperor did not desist till he had approached the extremity of the island. Here he observed very accurately to how slight a degree the sun declined below the horizon and the length of days and nights both summer and winter. Thus having been conveyed through practically the whole of the hostile region,--for he was really conveyed in a covered chair most of the way on account of his weakness,--he returned to friendly territory, first forcing the **Britons** to come to terms on condition that he should abandon a good part of their territory.

Antoninus also disturbed him and involved him in vain worry by his intemperate life, by his evident intention to murder his brother if the chance should present itself, and finally by plotting against his own father. Once he leaped suddenly out of his quarters, shouting and bawling and feigning to have been wronged by Castor. This man was the best of the Caesarians attending upon Severus, had been trusted with his opinions, and had been assigned the duties of chamberlain. Certain soldiers with whom previous arrangements had been made hereupon gathered and joined the outcry; but they were checked in short order, as Severus himself appeared on the scene and punished the more unruly among them.

On another occasion both were riding to meet the Caledonians for the purpose of receiving them and holding a conference about a truce, and Antoninus undertook to kill his father outright with his own hand. They were going along on their horses, for Severus, although his feet were rather shrunken by an ailment, nevertheless was on horseback himself and the rest of the army was following: the enemy's force, too, was likewise a spectator. At this juncture, in the midst of the silence and order, Antoninus reined up his horse and drew his sword, apparently intending to strike his father in the back. Seeing this, the other horsemen in the detachment raised a cry of alarm, which scared the son, so that he did nothing further. Severus turned at their shout and saw the sword; however, he uttered not a syllable but ascended the tribunal, finished what he had to do, and returned to the general's tent. Then he called his son and Papinianus and Castor, ordered a sword to be placed within easy reach, and upbraided the youth for having dared to do such a thing at all and especially for having been on the point of committing so great a crime in the presence of all the allies and the enemy. Finally he said: "Now if you desire to slay me and have done, put an end to me here. You are strong: I am an old man and prostrate. If you have no objection to this, but shrink from becoming my actual murderer, there stands by your side Papinianus the prefect, whom you may order to put me out of the way. He will certainly do anything that you command, since you are emperor." Though he spoke in this fashion, he still did the plotter no harm, in spite of the fact that he had often blamed Marcus for not ending the life of Commodus and that he had himself often threatened his son with this treatment. Such words, however, were invariably spoken in a fit of anger: on this

occasion he allowed his love of offspring to get the better of his love of country; yet in doing so he simply betrayed his other child, for he well knew what would happen.

Upon another revolt of the inhabitants of the island he summoned the soldiers and bade them invade the rebels' country, killing whomsoever they should encounter. He added these verses:

"Let none escape utter destruction At our hands. Yea, whatso is found in the womb of the mother, Child unborn though it be, let it not escape utter destruction!"

When this had been done and the Caledonians as well as the Maeatians revolted, he proceeded with preparations to make war upon them in person. While he was thus engaged his sickness carried him off on the fourth of February. (211)

Antoninus, it is said, contributed something to the result. Before he closed his eyes he is reputed to have spoken these words to his children (I shall use the exact phraseology without embellishment): "Be harmonious, enrich the soldiers, scorn everybody else." After this his body arrayed in military garb was placed upon a pyre, and as a mark of honor the soldiers and his children ran about it. Those present who had any military gifts threw them upon it and the sons applied the fire. Later his bones were put in a jar of purple stone, conveyed to Rome, and deposited in the tomb of the Antonines. It is said that Severus sent for the jar a little before his death and after feeling it over remarked: "Thou shalt hold a man that the world could nothold."

He was slow-moulded but strong, though he eventually grew very weak from gout: mentally he was very keen and very firm. He wished for more education than he got and for this reason he was sagacious rather than a good talker. Toward friends not forgetful, to enemies most oppressive, he was capable of everything that he desired to accomplish but careless of everything said about him. Hence he gathered money from every source (save that he killed no one to get it) [and met all necessary expenditures quite ungrudgingly. He restored very many of the ancient buildings and inscribed upon them his own name to signify that he had repaired them so as to be new structures, and from his private funds. Also he spent a great deal uselessly upon renovating and repairing other places], erecting, for instance, to Bacchus and Hercules a temple of huge size. Yet, though his expenses were enormous, he left behind not merely a few myriad denarii, easily reckoned, but a great many. Again, he rebuked such persons as were not chaste, even going to the extent of enacting certain laws in regard to adultery, with the result that there were any number of prosecutions for that offence. When consul I once found three thousand entered on the docket. But inasmuch as very few persons appeared to conduct their cases, he too ceased to trouble his head about it.

Apropos of this, a quite witty remark is reported of the wife of Argentocoxus, a **Caledonian**, to Julia Augusta, when the latter after the treaty was joking her about the free intercourse of her sex in **Britain** with men. Thereupon the foreigner asserted: "We fulfill the necessities of nature in a much better way than you Roman women. We have dealings openly with the best men, whereas you let yourselves be debauched in secret by the vilest." This is what the **British** woman said.

The following is the style of life that Severus led in time of peace. He was sure to be doing something before dawn, while it was still night, and after this he would go to walk, telling and hearing of the interests of the empire. Then he held court, and separately (unless there were some great festival); and indeed, he did this very well. Those on trial were allowed plenty of water [Footnote: The water-clock] and he granted us, his coadjutors, full liberty to speak.--He continued to preside till noonday. After that he went riding as much as he could. Next he took some kind of exercise and a bath. He then consumed a not meagre lunch, either by himself or with his children. Next, as a rule, he enjoyed a nap. Later he rose, attended to his remaining duties of

administration, and while walking about occupied himself with discussions of both Greek and Latin lore. Then, toward evening, he would bathe again and dine with his attendants. Very seldom did he have any outsider to dinner and only on days when it was quite unavoidable did he arrange expensive banquets.--He lived sixty-five years, nine months, and twenty-five days, for he was born on the eleventh of April. Of this he had ruled seventeen years, eight months and three days. In fine, he showed himself so active that even expiring he gasped: "Come, give it to us, if we have anything to do!"

### **Geta Emperor 211 Antoninus (Caracalla) Emperor 211-217**

#### **213Cassius Dio Cocceianus**

The **Celtic** nations, however, afforded him neither pleasure nor any pretence of cleverness or courage but proved him to be nothing more nor less than a cheat, a simpleton, and an arrant coward. Antoninus made a campaign among the Alamanni and wherever he saw a spot suitable for habitation he would order: "There let a fort be erected: there let a city be built." To those spots he applied names relating to himself, yet the local designations did not get changed; for some of the people were unaware of the new appellations and others thought he was joking. Consequently he came to entertain a contempt for them and would not keep his hands off this tribe even; but, whereas he had been saying that he had come as an ally, he accorded them treatment to be expected of a most implacable foe. He called a meeting of their men of military age under promise that they were to receive pay, and then at a given signal,--his raising aloft his own shield,--he had them surrounded and cut down; he also sent cavalry around and arrested all others not present.

Antoninus commended in the senate by means of a letter Pandion, a fellow who had previously been an understudy of charioteers but in the war against the Alamanni drove his chariot for him and in this capacity was his comrade and fellow soldier. And he asserted that he had been saved by this man from a portentous danger and was not ashamed to evince greater gratitude to him than to the soldiers, whom in their turn he regarded as our superiors.

Some of the most distinguished men whom Antoninus slew he ordered to be cast out unburied.

He made a search for the tomb of Sulla and repaired it, and reared a cenotaph to Mesomedes, who had written a compilation of citharoedic modes. He honored the latter because he was himself learning to sing to the zither and the former because he was emulating his cruelty.

Still, in cases of necessity and urgent campaigns, he was simple and frugal, toiling with painstaking care in menial offices as much as the rest. He trudged beside the soldiers and ran beside them, not taking a bath nor changing his clothing, but helping them in every labor and choosing absolutely the same food as they had. Often he would send to distinguished champions on the enemy's side and challenge them to single combat. The details of generalship in which he certainly ought to have been most versed he managed least well, as if he thought that victory lay in the performance of those services mentioned and not in this science of commanding.

He conducted war also against a certain **Celtic** tribe of **Cenni**. These warriors are said to have assailed the Romans with the utmost fierceness, using their mouths to pull from their flesh the missiles with which the Osrhoeni wounded them, that they might give their hands no respite in slaughtering the foe. Nevertheless even they, after selling the name of defeat at a high figure, made an agreement with him to go into Germany on condition of being spared. Their women [and those of the Alamanni] all

who were captured [would not, in truth, await a servile doom, but] when Antoninus asked them whether they desired to be sold or slain, chose the latter alternative. Afterward, as they were offered for sale, they all killed themselves and some of their children as well. [Many also of the people dwelling close to the ocean itself, near the mouth of the Albis, sent envoys to him and asked his friendship, when their real concern was to get money. For after he had done as they desired, they would frequently attack him, threatening to begin a war; and with all such he came to terms. Even though his offer was contrary to their principles, yet when they saw the gold pieces they were captivated. To them he gave true gold pieces, but the silver and gold money with which he provided the Romans was alloyed.] He manufactured the one of lead with a silver plating and the other of bronze with a gold plating.

The same ruler published some of his devices directly, pretending that they were excellent and worthy of commendation, however base their actual character. Other intentions he rather unwillingly made known through the very precautions which he took to conceal them, as, for example, in the case of the money. He plundered the whole land and the whole sea and left nothing whatever unharmed. The chants of the enemy made Antoninus frenzied and beside himself, hearing which some of the Alamanni asserted that they had used charms to put him out of his mind.] He was sick in body, partly with ordinary and partly with private diseases, and was sick also in mind, suffering from distressing visions; and often he thought he was being pursued by his father and his brother, armed with swords. Therefore he called up spirits to find some remedy against them, among others the spirit of his father and of Commodus. But not one would speak a word to him except Commodus. [Geta, so they say, attended Severus, though unsummoned. Yet not even he offered any suggestion to relieve the emperor, but on the contrary terrified him the more.

This is what he said: "Draw nearer judgment, which the gods demand of thee" then something else, and finally-- "having in secret places a disease hard to heal."

For letting these facts become public many suffered unseemly outrage. But to Antoninus not one of the gods gave any response pertaining to the healing of either his body or his mind, although he showered attention upon all the most distinguished shrines. This showed in the clearest light that they regarded not his offerings, nor his sacrifices, but only his purposes and his deeds. He got no aid from Apollo Grannus nor Asclepius nor Serapis, in spite of his many supplications and his unwearying persistence. Even when abroad he sent to them prayers and sacrifices and votive offerings and many runners traveled to them daily, carrying things of the sort. He also went himself, hoping to prevail by appearing in person, and he performed all the usual practices of devotees, but he obtained nothing that would contribute to health.

## **210 Historia Augusta** The Life of Septimius Severus

He built a wall across the island of **Britain** from sea to sea, and thus made the province secure — the crowning glory of his reign; in recognition thereof he was given the name **Britannicus**. He freed Tripolis, the region of his birth, from fear of attack by crushing sundry warlike tribes. And he bestowed upon the Roman people, without cost, a most generous daily allowance of oil in perpetuity.

(Part removed)

In the eighteenth year of his reign, now an old man and overcome by a most grievous disease, he died at **Eboracum** in **Britain**, after subduing various tribes that seemed a possible menace to the province. He left two sons, Antoninus Bassianus and Geta, also named by him Antoninus in honour of Marcus. Severus was laid in the tomb of Marcus Antoninus, whom of all the emperors he revered so greatly that he even deified Commodus and held that all emperors should thenceforth assume the

name Antoninus as they did that of Augustus. At the demand of his sons, who gave him a most splendid funeral, he was added by the senate to the deified.

(Part removed)

On another occasion, when he was returning to his nearest quarters from an inspection of the wall at **Lugvallum** in **Britain**, at a time when he had not only proved victorious but had concluded a perpetual peace, just as he was wondering what omen would present itself, an Ethiopian soldier, who was famous among buffoons and always a notable jester, met him with a garland of cypress-boughs. And when Severus in a rage ordered that the man be removed from his sight, troubled as he was by the man's ominous colour and the ominous nature of the garland, the Ethiopian by way of jest cried, it is said, "You have been all things, you have conquered all things, now, O conqueror, be a god." And when on reaching the town he wished to perform a sacrifice, in the first place, through a misunderstanding on the part of the rustic soothsayer, he was taken to the Temple of Bellona, and, in the second place, the victims provided him were black. And then, when he abandoned the sacrifice in disgust and betook himself to the Palace, through some carelessness on the part of the attendants the black victims followed him up to its very doors.

His last words, it is said, were these: "The state, when I received it, was harassed on every side; I leave it at peace, even in **Britain**; old now and with crippled feet, I bequeath to my two Antonini an empire which is strong, if they prove good, feeble, if they prove bad." After this, he issued orders to give the tribune the watchword "Let us toil," because Pertinax, when he assumed the imperial power, had given the word "Let us be soldiers". He then ordered a duplicate made of the royal statue of Fortune which was customarily carried about with the emperors and placed in their bedrooms, in order that he might leave this most holy statue to each of his sons; but later, when he realized that the hour of death was upon him, he gave instructions, they say, that the original should be placed in the bed-chambers of each of his sons, the co-emperors, on alternate days. As for this direction, Bassianus ignored it and then murdered his brother.

His body was borne from **Britain** to Rome, and was everywhere received by the provincials with profound reverence. Some men say, however, that only a golden urn containing Severus' ashes was so conveyed, and that this was laid in the tomb of the Antonines, while Septimius himself was cremated where he died.

**St Zephyrinus Pope 199-217**

**Macrinus Emperor 217-218**

**Emperors Elagabalus & Seleucus & Uranius & Gellius Maximus & Verus 218-222**

**St Callistus 1 Pope 217-222** Callistus and the following three popes were opposed by St. Hippolytus, antipope (217-236)

**St Urban 1 Pope 222-230**

**Severus Alexander Emperor 222-235**

**L Seius Sallustius Emperor 225-227**

**225. Annals of the Four Masters**

After Lughaidh, i.e. Maccon, son of Macniadh, had been thirty years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he fell by the hand of Feircis, son of Coman Eces, after he had been expelled from Teamhair Tara by Cormac, the grandson of Conn.

**226.** Fearghus Duibhheadach, son of Imchadh, was king over Ireland for the space of a year, when he fell in the battle of Crinna, by Cormac, grandson of Conn, by the hand of Lughaidh Lagha. There fell by him also, in the rout across Breagh, his two brothers, Fearghus the Long Haired and Fearghus the Fiery, who was called Fearghus Caisfhiacloch of the Crooked Teeth.

Of them was said:

1. Upon the one stone at Rathcro  
Were slain the three Fearghus's;  
Cormac said this is fine,  
His hand did not fail Laighe.

In the army of Cormac came Tadhg, son of Cian, and Lughaidh, to that battle; and it was as a territorial reward for the battle that Cormac gave to Tadhg the land on which are the Ciannachta, in Magh Breagh, as is celebrated in other books.

**227.** The first year of Cormac, son of Art, son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, as king over Ireland.

**234.** The eighth year of Cormac. Oilioll Olum, son of Mogh Nuadhat, King of Munster, died.

### **235 Historia Augusta** The Life of Severus Alexander

Other victories also were won—in Mauretania Tingitana by Furius Celsus, in Illyricum by Varius Macrinus, Alexander's kinsman, and in Armenia by Junius Palmatus, and from all these places laurelled letters were sent to Alexander. When these had been read, on different occasions, before the senate and the people and wished-for tidings had arrived from Isauria also, honorary cognomina taken from the names of all these lands were conferred on the Emperor. Moreover, those who had won success in the administration of the state received the consular insignia, with the addition of priestly offices and grants of land for any who were poor and now burdened with age. The captives taken from the various nations, if their childhood or youth permitted it, were given to the Emperor's friends, but those who were of royal blood or noble rank were enrolled for warfare, though not for any of great importance. The lands taken from the enemy were presented to the leaders and soldiers of the frontier-armies, with the provision that they should continue to be theirs only if their heirs entered military service, for, he said, men serve with greater zeal if they are defending their own lands too. He added to these lands, of course, both draught-animals and slaves, in order that they might be able to till what they had received, and that it might not come to pass that, through a lack of inhabitants or the old age of the owners, the lands bordering on the country of the barbarians should be left uninhabited, for this, he thought, would be most discreditable.

After this he was regarded with the greatest affection by both the populace and the senate, and when he set out for the war against the **Germans**, though all hoped for victory, they were unwilling to let him depart and escorted him on his way for a distance of a hundred or a hundred and fifty miles. It was, indeed, a very grave matter both for the state and for himself that Gaul should be plundered by German inroads, and his sense of humiliation was increased by the thought that now that the Parthians had been defeated a nation should still be hanging over the neck of the commonwealth, which, even under insignificant emperors, had seemed to be in a state of subjection. Therefore he hastened against the enemy by long marches, and the soldiers, too, were eager. But on his arrival he found that there also the legions were ready to mutiny, and accordingly he ordered them to be disbanded. The Gallic

temper, however, which is rough and surly and frequently a source of danger to emperors, would not brook his excessive strictness, which seemed all the greater after Elagabalus. And finally, while he was in quarters with a few men in **Britain**, or, according to some, in **Gaul**, in a village named Sicilia, some soldiers murdered him. This was not done in response to any general sentiment but rather as the act of an assassin, the ringleaders being men who had thriven on the gifts of Elagabalus and would not tolerate a stricter prince. Many, indeed, relate that he was slain by some recruits despatched by Maximinus (to whom they had been assigned for their training), and many others give different accounts. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed that those who killed him were soldiers, for they hurled many insults at him, speaking of him as a child and of his mother as greedy and covetous.

He ruled for thirteen years and nine days, and he lived for twenty-nine years, three months, and seven days. He did everything in accordance with his mother's advice, and she was killed with him.

The omens portending his death were as follows: When he was praying for a blessing for his birthday the victim escaped, all covered with blood, and, as he was standing in the crowd dressed in the clothes of a consideration, it stained the white robe which he wore. In the Palace in a certain city from which he was setting out to the war, an ancient laurel-tree of huge size suddenly fell at full length. Also three fig-trees, which bear the kind of figs known as Alexandrian, fell suddenly before his tent-door, for they were close to the Emperor's quarters. Furthermore, as he went to war a **Druid** prophetess cried out in the Gallic tongue, "Go, but do not hope for victory, and put no trust in your soldiers." And when he mounted a tribunal in order to make a speech and say something of good omen, he began in this wise: "On the murder of the Emperor Elagabalus". But it was regarded as a portent that when about to go to war he began an address to the troops with words of ill-omen.

All these portents, however, he looked upon with the profoundest contempt. And having set out for the war, he was slain in the aforementioned village in the following manner. He had lunched, as it happened, in his usual way at a general meal, that is to say, in an open tent and on the same food that was used by the troops — for no other kind of food was found in the tent by the soldiers when they tore it to pieces. And as he was resting after the meal, at about the seventh hour, one of the Germans, who was performing the duties of guard, came in while all were asleep; the Emperor, however, who alone was awake at the moment, saw him and said, "What is it, comrade? Do you bring news of the enemy?" But the fellow, terrified by his fears and having no hope that he could escape, seeing that he had burst into the Emperor's tent, went out to his comrades and urged them to kill their rigorous prince. Whereupon a great number in arms quickly entered the tent, and after slaying all who, though unarmed, resisted, they stabbed the Emperor himself with many thrusts. Some relate that nothing at all was said and that the soldiers merely cried out, "Go forth, depart," and thus slaughtered this excellent man. But all the military array, which Maximinus afterwards led to Germany, was Alexander's, and it was a very powerful one, too, by reason of the soldiers from Armenia, Osroene, and Parthia, composed, as it was, of men of every race.

Alexander's contempt for death is clearly shown both by the intrepid spirit with which he always put down the soldiery, and also by the following incident. When Thrasybulus the astrologer, with whom he was on the most friendly terms, told him that it was his destiny to fall by the sword of a barbarian, he first expressed his joy, thinking that he was fated to die in battle in a manner worthy of an emperor; then, speaking at length he pointed out that all the noblest men had died a violent death, mentioning Alexander himself, whose name he bore, then Pompey, Caesar, Demosthenes, Cicero, and other men of note, none of whom had met with a peaceful

end. And such was his courage that he thought that he ought to be likened to the gods, were he to perish in battle. But the result deceived his hopes; for he did, indeed, fall by the sword of a barbarian and by the hand of a barbarian guard, but it was not in battle, though during the course of a war.

His death was greatly lamented by the soldiers, even by those whom he had discharged, and they slew the men who had committed the murder. But the Roman people and all the senate and all the inhabitants of the provinces never mourned anything with greater sorrow and bitterness of spirit; and at the same time the cruel necessity of fate seemed to be shown in the harshness and roughness of his successor Maximinus (natural enough in a soldier), on whom, together with his son, the imperial power was conferred after Alexander. The senate raised him to the rank of the gods, and he was granted the honour of a cenotaph in Gaul and a magnificent tomb in Rome. Moreover, a college of priests was appointed in his honour, called Alexandrian, and a feast-day, too, was decreed, called by his mother's name as well as by his, which even today is scrupulously observed at Rome on the anniversary of his birth.

The cause of his murder, so others maintain, was this, namely, that his mother wished to abandon the war against the Germans and return to the East in order to display her power there, and at this the soldiers grew angry. But this is only a fiction of the friends of Maximinus, who did not wish to let it appear that the best of emperors had been slain by a friend in defiance of all law, both human and divine.

Up to this time the Roman Empire had been governed by princes who had reigns of considerable length, but after Alexander various men seized the power in rivalry with one another, of whom some reigned only six months, others for a year, and a number, again, for two or, at the most, three years, down to the time of those emperors, who extended the Empire to wider bounds — Aurelian, I mean, and his successors, concerning whom, if life be granted me, I shall publish all I have learned.

### **Emperors Maximinus Thrax & Magnus & Quartinus 235-238**

**St Pontian Pope 230-235**

**St Anterus Pope 235-236**

**St Fabian Pope 236-250**

#### **236. Annals of the Four Masters**

The tenth year of Cormac. The battle of Granard by Cormac, the grandson of Conn, against the Ulstermen this year. A battle at Eu, in Magh Aei, against Aedh, son of Eochaidh, son of Conall, King of Connaught. A battle at Eth; the battle of Ceann Daire; the battle of Sruth against the Ulstermen; the battle of Slighe Cuailgne.

**237.** The eleventh year of Cormac. The battle of Ath Beatha; the battle of Dumha this year by Cormac.

**238.** The twelfth year of Cormac. A battle at Cuiltochair thrice, and three battles at Dubhadh by Cormac.

### **Emperors Gordian I & Gordian II & Pupienus (Maximus) & Balbinus 238 Gordian III Emperor 238-244**

#### **239. Annals of the Four Masters**

The thirteenth year of Cormac. The battle of Allamagh, and the seven battles of Elve, by Cormac.

**240.** The fourteenth year of Cormac. The battle of Magh Techt, and the fleet of Cormac sailed across Magh Rein (i.e. across the sea), this year, so that it was on that occasion he obtained the sovereignty of Alba Scotland.

**(Sabinianus Emperor 240)**

**Minucius Felix**, The Octavius

What is the reason of our being born? what means the desire of begetting? Is it not given by God, and that the breasts should become full of milk as the offspring grows to maturity, and that the tender progeny should grow up by the nourishment afforded by the abundance of the milky moisture? Neither does God have care alone for the universe as a whole, but also for its parts. **Britain** is deficient in sunshine, but it is refreshed by the warmth of the sea that flows around it.

**241. Annals of the Four Masters**

The fifteenth year of Cormac. These are the battles of Cormac fought against Munster this year: the battle of Berre; the battle of Loch Lein; the battle of Luimneach; the battle of Grian; the battle of Classach; the battle of Muireasc; the battle of Fearta, in which fell Eochaidh Taebhfada of the Long Side, son of Oilioll Olum; the battle of Samhain, in which fell Cian, son of Oilioll Olum; and the battle of Ard Cam. The massacre of the girls at Cleanfearta, at Teamhair, by Dunlang, son of Enna Niadh, King of Leinster. Thirty royal girls was the number, and a hundred maids with each of them. Twelve princes of the Leinstermen did Cormac put to death together, in revenge of that massacre, together with the exaction of the Borumha with an increase after Tuathal.

**Emperors Philip The Arab & Pacatianus & Iotapianus & Silbannacus & Sponsianus & Philip Iunior 244-249**

**248. Annals of the Four Masters** The twenty second year of Cormac. A battle at Fochard Muirtheimhne by Cormac this year.

**Emperors Decius & T Julius Priscus & Iulius Valens Licinianus & Herennius Etruscus & Histilian 249-251**

**St Cornelius Pope 251-253 Opposed by Novatian in 251**

**Emperors Trebonianus Gallus & Volusianus & Uranius Antoninus & Aemilius Aemilianus 251-253**

**Emperors Valerian & Mareades 252-260**

**St Lucius 1 Pope 253-254**

**c255 Historia Augusta** (*Ed. I imagine Generals in Britannia had a similar establishment*)

A letter from Valerian to Zosimio, the procurator of Syria:

"We have named Claudius, a man of Illyrian birth, as tribune of our most valiant and loyal Fifth Legion, the Martian, for he is superior the all the most loyal and most valiant men of old. By way of supplies you will give him each year out of our private treasury three thousand pecks of wheat, six thousand pecks of barley, two thousand pounds of bacon, three thousand five hundred pints of well-aged wine, one hundred

and fifty pints of the best oil, six hundred pints of oil of the second grade, twenty pecks of salt, one hundred and fifty pounds of wax, and as much hay and straw, cheap wine, greens and herbs as shall be sufficient, thirty half-score of hides for the tents; also six mules each year, three horses each year, fifty pounds of silverware each year, one hundred and fifty Philips, bearing our likeness, each year, and as a New-year's gift forty-seven Philips and one hundred and sixty third-Philips. Likewise in cups and tankards and pots eleven pounds. Also two red military tunics each year, two military cloaks each year, two silver clasps gilded, one golden clasp with a Cyprian pin, one sword-belt of silver gilded, one ring with two gems to weigh an ounce, one armlet to weigh seven ounces, one collar to weigh a pound, one gilded helmet, two shields inlaid with gold, one cuirasse, to be returned. Also two Herculian lances, two javelins, two reaping-hooks, and four reaping-hooks for cutting hay. Also one cook, to be returned, one muleteer, to be returned, two beautiful women taken from the captives. One white part-silk garment ornamented with purple from Girba, and one under-tunic with Moorish purple. One secretary, to be returned, and one server at table, to be returned. Two pairs of Cyprian couch-covers, two white under-garments, a pair of men's leg-bands, one toga, to be returned, one broad-striped tunic, to be returned. Two huntsmen to serve as attendants, one waggon-maker, one headquarters-steward, one waterer, one fisherman, one confectioner. One thousand pounds of fire-wood each day, if there is an abundant supply, but if not, as much as there is and wherever it is, and four braziers of charcoal each day. One bath-man and firewood for the bath, but if there is none, he shall bathe in the public bath. All else, which cannot be enumerated here because of its insignificance you will supply in due amount, but in no case shall the equivalent in money be given, and if there should be a lack of anything in any place, it shall not be supplied, nor shall the equivalent be exacted in money. All these things I have allowed him as a special case, as though he were not a mere tribune but rather a general, because to such a man as he an even larger allowance should be made."

**Emperors Galienus & Ingenuus & Regalianus & Macrianus Senior & Macrianus Iunior & Quietus & Piso & Valens & Ballista & Mussius Aemilianus & Memor & Aureolus & Celsus & Saturninus 253-268**

**St Stephen 1 Pope 254-257**

**St Sixtus II Pope 257-258**

**SBG St Mellonius** Bishop of Rouen, is said to have been a native of Cardiff, and to have been born about the year 257. He died in 311

**Gallic Emperor Postumus 260-269**

**c260 Historia Augusta** The Two Gallieni

Against these same Goths a battle was fought in Achaea under the leadership of Marcianus, and being defeated they withdrew from there through the country of the Achaeans. The Scythians — they are a portion of the Goths — devastated Asia and even plundered and burned the Temple of the Moon at Ephesus, the fame of which building is known through all nations. I am ashamed to relate what Gallienus used often to say at this time, when such things were happening, as though jesting amid the ills of mankind. For when he was told of the revolt of Egypt, he is said to have exclaimed "What! We cannot do without Egyptian linen!" and when informed that Asia had been devastated both by the violence of nature and by the inroads of the Scythians, he said, "What! We cannot do without saltpetre!" and when Gaul was lost,

he is reported to have laughed and remarked, "Can the commonwealth be safe without **Atrebat** cloaks?" Thus, in short, with regard to all parts of the world, as he lost them, he would jest, as though seeming to have suffered the loss of some article of trifling service. And finally, that no disaster might be lacking to his times, the city of Byzantium, famed for its naval wars and the key to the Pontus, was destroyed by the soldiers of Gallienus himself so completely, that not a single soul survived. In fact, no ancient family can now be found among the Byzantines, unless some member, engaged in travel or warfare, escaped to perpetuate the antiquity and noble descent of his stock.

### **St Dionysius Pope 260-268**

#### **262. Annals of the Four Masters**

The thirty-sixth year of Cormac. The battle of Cricinna Fregabhail was fought by Cormac against the Ulstermen, where fell Aenghus Finn, son of Fearghus Duibhheadach i.e. the Black Toothed, King of Ulster, with the slaughter of the Ulstermen about him.

**265.** The thirty-ninth year of Cormac. Ceallach, son of Cormac, and Cormac's lawgiver, were mortally wounded, and the eye of Cormac himself was destroyed with one thrust of a lance by Aenghus Gaibhuaibhtheach, son of Fiacha Suighdhe, son of Feidhlimidh the Lawgiver. Cormac afterwards fought and gained seven battles over the Deisi, in revenge of that deed, and he expelled them from their territory, so that they are now in Munster.

**266.** Forty years was Cormac, son of Art, son of Conn, in the sovereignty of Ireland, when he died at Cleiteach, the bone of a salmon sticking in his throat, on account of the siabhradh geni which Maelgenn, the Druid, incited at him, after Cormac had turned against the Druids, on account of his adoration of God in preference to them. Wherefore a devil attacked him, at the instigation of the Druids, and gave him a painful death. It was Cormac who composed Teagusc Na Righ, to preserve manners, morals, and government in the kingdom. He was a famous author in laws, synchronisms, and history, for it was he that established law, rule, and direction for each science, and for each covenant according to propriety; and it is his laws that governed all that adhered to them to the present time.

It was this Cormac, son of Art, also, that collected the Chroniclers of Ireland to Teamhair, and ordered them to write the chronicles of Ireland in one book, which was named the Psalter of Teamhair. In that book were entered the coeval exploits and synchronisms of the kings of Ireland with the kings and emperors of the world, and of the kings of the provinces with the monarchs of Ireland. In it was also written what the monarchs of Ireland were entitled to receive from the provincial kings, and the rents and dues of the provincial kings from their subjects, from the noble to the subaltern. In it also were described the boundaries and meares of Ireland, from shore to shore, from the province to the cantred, from the cantred to the townland, and from the townland to the traighidh of land. These things are celebrated in Leabhar Na nUidhri. They are evident in the Leabhar Dinnsenchusa.

**267.** Eochaidh Gonnat in the sovereignty of Ireland, when he fell by Lughaidh Meann, son of Aenghus, one of the Ulstermen.

**268.** The first year of Cairbre Liffeachair, son of Cormac, son of Art, in the sovereignty of Ireland.

### **Emperors Claudius II Gothicus & Censorinus & Quintillus 268-270**

#### **Galic Emperors Laelianus & Marius 269**

#### **Galic Emperor Victorinus 269-270**

## **Gallic Emperor Victorinus 269-270**

### **St Felix 1 Pope 269-274**

## **Emperors Aurelian & Domitianus & Urbanus & Septimus & Firmus & Feliessimus & Vaballathus 270-275**

### **c270AD Historia Augusta The Lives of Carus, Carinus and Numerian**

I do not consider it too painstaking or yet too much in the ordinary manner to insert a story about Diocletian Augustus that seems not out of place here — an incident which he regarded as an omen of his future rule. This story my grandfather related to me, having heard it from Diocletian himself. "When Diocletian," he said, "while still serving in a minor post, was stopping at a certain tavern in the land of the Tungri in Gaul, and was making up his daily reckoning with a woman, who was a **Druidess**, she said to him, 'Diocletian, you are far too greedy and far too stingy,' to which Diocletian replied, it is said, not in earnest, but only in jest, 'I shall be generous enough when I become emperor.' At this the Druidess said, so he related, 'Do not jest, Diocletian, for you will become emperor when you have slain a Boar (Aper).'" Now Diocletian always had in his mind a desire to rule, as Maximian knew and my grandfather also, to whom he himself told these words of the **Druidess**. Then, however, reticent, as was his wont, he laughed and said nothing. Nevertheless, in hunting, whenever there was opportunity, he always killed the boars with his very own hand. In fact, when Aurelian received the imperial power, then Probus, then Tacitus, and then Carus himself, Diocletian remarked, "I am always killing boars, but the other man enjoys the meat." It is now well known and a common story that when he had killed Aper, the prefect of the guard, he declared, it is said, "At last I have killed my fated Boar." My grandfather also used to say that Diocletian himself declared that he had no other reason for killing him with his own hand than to fulfill the **Druidess'** prophecy and to ensure his own rule. For he would not have wished to become known for such cruelty, especially in the first few days of his power, if Fate had not impelled him to this brutal act of murder.

### **270AD Historia Augusta The Life of Aurelian**

This may perhaps seem a marvellous thing that was learned by Diocletian and is said to have been related by Asclepiodotus to Celsinus his counsellor, but concerning there is posterity will be the judge. For he used to relate that on a certain occasion Aurelian consulted the **Druid** priestesses in Gaul and inquired of them whether the imperial power would remain with his descendants, but they replied, he related, that none would have a name more illustrious in the commonwealth than the descendants of Claudius. And, in fact, Constantius is now our emperor, a man of Claudius' blood, whose descendants, I ween, will attain to that glory which the **Druids** foretold. And this I have put in the Life of Aurelian for the reason that this response was made to him when he inquired in person.

**271. Annals of the Four Masters** The fourth year of Cairbre. Three battles were fought by Cairbre against the men of Munster, in defence of the rights of Leinster.

### **Gallic Emperors Tetricius I & Tetricius II 271-274**

**272. Annals of the Four Masters** The fifth year of Cairbre. Four battles by Cairbre against the men of Munster, in defence of the rights of Leinster.

**Galic Emperor Faustinus 274**  
**Tacitus Emperor 275-276**

**St Eutychian Pope 275-283**

**Florianus Emperor 276**

**276 Annals of the Four Masters** The ninth year of Cairbre in the sovereignty of Ireland. Aenghus Gaibuaibhtheach was killed this year by the sons of Cairbre Liffechair, namely, Fiacha Sraibhtine and Eochaidh Doimhlen.

**Emperors Probus & Bonosus & Proculus & Saturninus & Carus & Numerianus & Carinus 276-285**

**276 282 Historiae Augustae**

He (Probus) also had to cope with revolts of pretenders, and they were serious indeed. For Saturninus, 3 who had seized the rule of the East, he overcame only by battles of various kinds and by his well-known valour. But when Saturninus was crushed, such quiet prevailed in the East that, as the common saying is, not even a rebel mouse was heard. Then Proculus 4 and Bonosus 5 seized the rule at Agrippina in Gaul, and proceeded to claim all of **Britain** 6 and Spain and the provinces, also, of Farther Gaul, 7 but these men he defeated with the aid of barbarians.

But in order that you may not ask for more information now about either Saturninus, or Proculus, or Bonosus, I will put them all in a special book, relating a little concerning them, as seems fitting, or rather, as need demands. One fact, indeed, must be known, namely, that all the Germans, when Proculus asked for their aid, preferred to serve Probus rather than rule with Bonosus and Proculus. Hence he granted permission to all the Gauls and the Spaniards and **Britons** to cultivate vineyards and make wines, 1 and he himself planted chosen vines on Mount Alma near Sirmium in Illyricum, after having had the ground dug up by the hands of the soldiers.

**c280AD Historia Augusta The Life of Probus**

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**280 Historia Augusta The Lives of Firmus, Saturninus, Proculus and Bonosus**  
Let us now pass on to Bonosus, concerning whom I have written much less.

Bonosus was a Spaniard by birth, but in descent a **Briton**, though he had a Gallic mother. His father, so he himself used to say, was a rhetorician, but I have learned from others that he was only a teacher of letters. He lost his father when a child, and being reared by mother, a very brave woman, he learned nothing of literature. He served in the beginning as a legionary centurion, and next in the cavalry; he commanded in the ranks, he held tribuneships, he was general in charge of the Raetian frontier, and he drank as no man had ever drunk. In fact, Aurelian used often to say of him, "He was born, not to live, but to drink," and yet, because of his prowess in war, he long held him in honour. Indeed, whenever the envoys of barbarian nations came from any place, they were plied with wine in order that he might make them drunken, and when they were in wine learn from them all their secrets. But however much he drank himself, he always remained calm and sober, and, as Onesimus, the author of a Life of Probus, says, when in wine he was all the wiser. He possessed, furthermore, a marvellous quality, namely, that he could always discharge all he had drunk, so that neither his stomach nor his abdomen nor his bladder ever felt any discomfort.

He, then, at the time when the Roman galleys on the Rhine were burned by the **Germans**, fearing that he might have to suffer punishment, seized the imperial power. This he held longer than he deserved, for he was finally defeated by Probus only after a lengthy and difficult struggle, and he put an end to his life by the noose, which gave rise to the jest that it was not a man that was being hanged but a wine-jug.

He left two sons, both of whom were spared by Probus, and his wife, too, was treated with honour and given an allowance as long as she lived. She was in fact, as my grandfather also used to declare, a woman of unequalled excellence and also of noble family, though by race a Goth; for Aurelian had given her to him as wife in order that through his help he might learn all the plans of the Goths, for she was a maiden of royal blood.

There is still in existence a letter addressed to the governor of Thrace concerning this marriage and the gifts which Aurelian wished Bonosus to receive on the occasion of his wedding, and this letter I have inserted :

" From Aurelian Augustus to Gallonius Avitus, greeting. In a previous letter I wrote you to establish the Gothic noblewomen at Perinthus, and I assigned them rations, which they were not to receive singly, but seven of them together sharing one meal. For when they receive them singly, they get too little and the state loses too much. Now, however, since it is our wish that Bonosus take Hunila to wife, you will give her all we have ordered in the subjoined list, and you will celebrate the marriage at the expense of the state."

The list of gifts was as follows : " Violet tunics of part-silk provided with hoods, one tunic of part-silk with a golden stripe, to weigh a pound, two double-striped under-tunics, and all the other things that are befitting a matron. To Bonosus himself you will give one hundred Philips of gold, one thousand silver Antonines, and ten thousand bronze sesterces."

This is what I remember having read about Bonosus.

### **c280 Historia Augusta** The Lives of Carus, Carinus and Numerian

I should like this passage to be read by Junius Messalla, with whom I will dare to find fault frankly. For he has cut off his natural heirs and bestowed his ancestral fortune on players, giving a tunic of his mother's to an actress and a cloak of his father's to an actor — and rightly so, I suppose, if a gold and purple mantle of his grandmother's could be used as a costume by a tragic actor! Indeed, the name of

Messalla's wife is still embroidered on the violet mantle of a flute-player, who exults in it as the spoils of a noble house. Why, now, should I speak of those linen garments imported from Egypt? Why of those garments from Tyre and Sidon, so fine and transparent, of gleaming purple and famed for their embroidery-work? He has presented, besides, capes brought from the **Atrabati** and capes from Canusium and Africa, such splendour as never before was seen on the stage. All of this I have put into writing in order that future givers of spectacles may be touched by a sense of shame and so be deterred from cutting off their lawful heirs and squandering their inheritances on actors and mountebanks.

### **Late 3<sup>rd</sup> century Nemesianus**

Dogs also get rabies, a deadly peril. Whether it emanates from taint in a heavenly body when the Sun-God shoots but languid rays from a saddened sky, raising a pallid face in a world dismayed; or whether, rather, in striking the glowing back of the fire-tressed Lion, he drives deep into our friendly dogs his feverish heats, whether earth breathes forth contagion from its bosom, or harmful air is the cause of the evil, or whether, when cool water runs short, the torrid germs of fire grow strong throughout the veins — whatever it is, it stirs the inmost marrow beneath the heart, and with black venomous foam darts forth into ferocious snarls, compelling the dog to imprint its bites in madness. Learn, therefore, the curative potions and the treatment that brings health. In such cases you will take the fetid drug got from the beaver and work it well, forcing it to grow viscous with the friction of a flint: to this should be added powder from pounded or chopped ivory, and by a long process of blending you will get both to harden together: next put in gradually the liquid flow of milk besides, to enable you to pour in through an inserted horn doses which do not stick in the throat, and so banish the melancholy Furies, and settle the dogs' minds once more to friendliness.

But it is not only Spartan whelps or only Molossian which you must rear: sundered **Britain** sends us a swift sort, adapted to hunting-tasks in our world. You should not disdain the pedigree of the Pannonian breed, nor those whose progeny springs from Spanish blood. Moreover, keen whelps are produced within the confines of dry Libya, and their service you must not despise. Besides, Tuscan dogs often give a satisfaction not foreign to us. Even allowing that their shape is covered with shaggy hair and that they have limbs unlike quick-footed whelps, still they will give you an agreeable return in game; for they recognise the tracks on the meadow, though full of scents, and actually point to where a hare lies hid. Their mettle and their habits as well, and their discerning sense of smell I shall record presently; for the moment the whole equipment of the chase has to be explained, and I must deal with the attention due to horses.

### **St Caius Pope 283-296**

**238 ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE.** . This year suffered Saint Alban the Martyr.

### **LIBER BRITANNICUS.**

It was in that persecution over the world that Saint Albain—and Aron, and Juil, chiefs of the city Leigionum at that time,—died.

### **GILDAS**

These rays of light were received with lukewarm minds by the inhabitants, but they nevertheless took root among some of them in a greater or less degree, until the nine

years' persecution of the tyrant Diocletian, when the churches throughout the whole world were overthrown, all the copies of the Holy Scriptures which could be found burned in the streets, and the chosen pastors of God's flock butchered, together with their innocent sheep, in order that not a vestige, if possible, might remain in some provinces of Christ's religion. What disgraceful flights then took place--what slaughter and death inflicted by way of punishment in divers shapes,--what dreadful apostacies from religion; and on the contrary, what glorious crowns of martyrdom then were won, --what raving fury was displayed by the persecutors, and patience on the part of the suffering saints, ecclesiastical history informs us; for the whole church were crowding in a body, to leave behind them the dark things of this world, and to make the best of their way to the happy mansions of heaven, as if to their proper home.

God, therefore, who wishes all men to be saved, and who calls sinners no less than those who think themselves righteous, magnified his mercy towards us, and, as we know, during the above-named persecution, that Britain might not totally be enveloped in the dark shades of night, he, of his own free gift, kindled up among us bright luminaries of holy martyrs, whose places of burial and of martyrdom, had they not for our manifold crimes been interfered with and destroyed by the barbarians, would have still kindled in the minds of the beholders no small fire of divine charity. Such were St. Alban of Verulam, Aaron and Julius, citizens of Carlisle, \* and the rest, of both sexes, who in different places stood their ground in the Christian contest.

The first of these martyrs, St. Alban, for charity's sake saved another confessor who was pursued by his persecutors, and was on the point of being seized, by hiding him in his house, and then by changing clothes with him, imitating in this example of Christ, who laid down his life for his sheep, and exposing himself in the other's clothes to be pursued in his stead.

So pleasing to God was this conduct, that between his confession and martyrdom, he was honoured with the performance of wonderful miracles in presence of the impious blasphemers who were carrying the Roman standards, and like the Israelites of old, who trod dry-foot on unfrequented paths whilst the ark of the covenant stood some time on the sands in the midst of Jordan; so also the martyr, with a thousand others, opened a path across the noble river Thames, whose waters stood abrupt like precipices on either side; and seeing this, the first of his executors was stricken with awe, and from a wolf became a lamb; so that he thirsted for martyrdom, and boldly underwent that for which he thirsted.

The other holy martyrs were tormented with divers sufferings, and their limbs were racked in such unheard of ways, that they, without delay, erected the trophies of their glorious martyrdom even in the gates of the city of Jerusalem. For those who survived, hid themselves in woods and deserts, and secret caves, waiting until God, who is the righteous judge of all, should reward their persecutors with judgement, and themselves with protection of their lives.

**SBG St Amphibulus**, the Confessor who St Alban saved. is an invention of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

**SBG St Socrates & St Stephen.** Socrates and Stephen appear in one of the earliest amplifications of Bede's Martyrology. Rice Rees quotes Cressy's Church History, which says that they were "two noble British Christians and disciples of S. Amphibalus, who were martyred in the persecution of Diocletian. Father Stanton says that the scene of their passion was probably Monmouthshire or South Wales.

**283. Annals of the Four Masters** The sixteenth year of Cairbre. Finn, grandson of Baisgne, fell by Aichleach, son of Duibhdreann, and the sons of Uirgreann of the Luaighni Teamhrach, at Ath Brea, upon the Boinn Boyne, of which was said:

1. Finn was killed, it was with darts,  
With a lamentable wound;  
Aichleach, son of Duibhdreann, cut off  
The head of the son of Mochtamuin.
2. Were it not that Caeilti took revenge,  
It would have been a victory after all his true battles;  
The three were cut off by him,  
Exulting over the head of the royal champion.

**284.** After Cairbre Liffeachair had been seventeen years in the sovereignty of Ireland, he fell in the battle of Gabhra Aichle, by the hand of Semeon, son of Cearb, one of the Fotharta; Fearcorb, the son of Cormac Cas, having brought the Fiana with him, against the king, to defend Leath Mhogha against him.

### **Diocletian Emperor 284-305 and Maximian 286-305**

#### **284 LIBER BRITANNICUS.**

Ab incarnatione Domini cclxxxiii. Dioclistan, the thirty-third king after Juil, and Maximin, came into the island of Britain. It was in their time that Carausius held the sovereignty of Britain seven years, until Alectus killed him, and held the sovereignty himself for three years, until Asclipidotus killed him, and became king himself for ten years. Dioclistan, in the east of the world, was persecuting the Christians, and Maiscimen in the west.

#### **284 King Alfred.** Book VI Chap XXX

In the year of Rome 1041, Diocletian succeeded to the empire, and reigned twenty years. He appointed under him a younger Ceaser, and sending him against the Gauls, who had lately raised some commotions, they were soon subdued. In those days three Kings declared war against Diocletian, Carausius in Bretlande, Achileus in Egypt, and Narses in persia. On this occasion he appointed three Caesars, Maximianus, Constantine, and Galerius. Maximianus was sent into Africa, where he overcame the enemy; Constantine into Gaul, where he subdued the Alemani, and afterwards the island Britannia.

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#### **The Annals of Clonmacnoise.**

The division of Ireland stood for one year untill Owen More als Moynod, being well ayded by his Brother in law the king of Spains sonn and a Great army of the Spaniards, picked ocation to quarrell & fall out with the K. for the Costomes of the shiping of Dublin alleging that there came more shippes of K. Conn's side then of his side, and that he would needs have the Custome in common between them, which K. Conn refused, whereupon they were Insenced mightily against one another, met with their Great armies on the playnes & heath of Moylen 1 in the territory of Fercall,

where the army of Owen More was overthrown, himself & Fergus the king of Spaine sonn slaine & afterwards buried in two little Hillocks, now to be seen on the said plains which as some say are the tombs of the said Owen and Fergus. The K. having thus slaine & vanquished his enemies, he raigned peaceably quietly 20 years w th great increase & plenty of all good things among his subjects throughout the whole kingdom, soe as all in general had noe want until the kings Brother Eochie Finn before mentioned and Fiagha Swyn seeing the K. had 3 Goodly sonns Art, Connly and Crionna, which were like to inheritt the Crowen after their fathers death sent Private message to Tiprady Tyreagh sonne of king Mall mRochrye whoe was slaine by felym Reaghtwar the said king Conn's father as before is specified. Whereupon the said Tybrady with a very willing hart came up to Taragh accompanied w th certaine other malefactors, assaulted the king of unewares and wilfully killed him on Tuesday the 20th of October in Anno 172 in the 100 yeare of the kings age as he was makeing Great Preparation towards the great Feast of Taragh called feis Taragh, w ch yearly on Hollantide and for certaine dayes after was held.

**285. Annals of the Four Masters** Fothadh was one year over Ireland, when Fothadh Cairptheach was slain by Fothadh Airgtheach. Fothadh Airgtheach was afterwards slain in the battle of Ollarba, in Magh Line, by Caeilte.

**286.** The first year of the reign of Fiacha Sraibhtine over Ireland.

### **286 – 293 Carausius Emperor of Britain.**

**Panagyrice on Constantius Caesar.** (Constantius 1 father of Constantine the Great. recovering Britain from Carausius between 288 & 293)

The **Britons** also, then a barbarous nation accustomed only to enemies as yet half-naked, such as the **Picts** and **Hiberni**, yielded easily to the arms and standards of Rome – nearly so easily that Ceaser should have boasted that in one campaign he had crossed the ocean.

**BEDE CHAP. VI.** Of the reign of Diocletian, and how he persecuted the Christians. [286 AD]

In the year of our Lord 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, and chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculus, his colleague in the empire. In their time, one Carausius, of very mean birth, but a man of great ability and energy, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth, by not restoring to its owners any of the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself; thus giving rise to the suspicion that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. When, therefore, an order was sent by Maximian that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial purple, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly conquered and held it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Praetorian guards, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculus in the west, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and cruel than almost any before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and the

slaughter of martyrs. Finally, Britain also attained to the great glory of bearing faithful witness to God.

**286 LIBER BRITANNICUS.** Carausius afterwards came bravely to avenge Severus on the Britons, so that the King of Britain fell by him, and he assumed the royal robes in spite of the king, i. e. of the emperor; so that Alectus, the Roman champion, killed him, and he himself *viz. Alectus* seized the kingdom afterwards for a long time.

#### **NENNIUS**

The fourth was the emperor and tyrant, Carausius, who, incensed at the murder of Severus, passed into Britain, and attended by the leaders of the Roman people, severely avenged upon the chiefs and rulers of the Britons, the cause of Severus.

**289 Panegyric of Maximian** How many ages, most invincible rulers, do you generate for yourselves and for the State by sharing the guardianship of your world? Although its security was assured, for every foe was overcome, yet it demanded too many journeys in different directions or to places that had to be revisited. For indeed once the Parthian beyond the Tigris has been reduced to subjection, Dacia restored, the frontiers of Germany and Raetia extended right to the headwaters of the Danube, and the reclaiming of **Batavia** and **Britain** resolved upon, the empire, increased in size and about to be increased further, required greater guidance, and those who by their valour had extended the boundaries of Roman power were bound by piety to give imperial power to a son.

#### **Panegyric on Constantine Augustus**

Nor do I say that he, even with so many great and various deeds accomplished, deemed worthy of conquest the forests and swamps of the Caledonian and other Picts, nor nearby **Hibernia** nor furthest Thule nor, if they exist, the Isles of the Blessed.

#### **291. Annals of the Four Masters**

The sixth year of Fiacha in the sovereignty. The battle of Duibhlinn was fought by Fiacha against the Leinstermen; three battles at Sliabh Toadh; the battle of Smear; and also the battle of Ciarmhagh, by Fiacha Sraibhtine.

#### **GILDAS**

In less than ten years, therefore, of the above-named persecution, and when these bloody decrees began to fail in consequence of the death of their authors, all Christ's young disciples, after so long and wintry a night, begin to behold the genial light of heaven. They rebuild the churches, which had been levelled to the ground; they found, erect, and finish churches to the holy martyrs, and everywhere show their ensigns as token of their victory; festivals are celebrated and sacraments received with clean hearts and lips, and all the church's sons rejoice as it were in the fostering bosom of a mother. For this holy union remained between Christ their head and the members of his church, until the Arian treason, fatal as a serpent, and vomiting its poison from beyond the sea, caused deadly dissension between brothers inhabiting the same house, and thus, as if a road were made across the sea, like wild beasts of all descriptions, and darting the poison of every heresy from their jaws, they inflicted dreadful wounds upon their country, which is ever desirous to hear something new, and remains constant long to nothing.

#### **293 – 297 Alectus emperor of Britain**

## St Marcellius Pope 296-304

**298 Ammianus Marcellinus** While this was happening in the East, Constantius was passing the winter at Arelate, where he gave entertainments in the theatre and the circus with ostentatious magnificence. Then, on the 10th of October, which completed the thirtieth year of his reign, giving greater weight to his arrogance and accepting every false or doubtful charge as evident and proven, among other atrocities he tortured **Gerontius**, a count of the party of Magnentius, and visited him with the sorrow of exile. And, as an ailing body is apt to be affected even by slight annoyances, so his narrow and sensitive mind, thinking that every sound indicated something done or planned at the expense of his safety, made his victory lamentable through the murder of innocent men. For if anyone of the military commanders or ex-officials, or one of high rank in his own community, was accused even by rumour of having favoured the party of the emperor's opponent, he was loaded with chains and dragged about like a wild beast. And whether a personal enemy pressed the charge or no one at all, as though it was enough that he had been named, informed against, or accused, he was condemned to death, or his property confiscated, or he was banished to some desert island.

Moreover his harsh cruelty, whenever the majesty of the empire was said to be insulted, and his angry passions and unfounded suspicions were increased by the bloodthirsty flattery of his courtiers, who exaggerated everything that happened and pretended to be greatly troubled by the thought of an attempt on the life of a prince on whose safety, as on a thread, they hypocritically declared that the condition of the whole world depended. And he is even said to have given orders that no one who had ever been punished for these or similar offences should be given a new trial after a writ of condemnation had once been presented to him in the usual manner, which even the most inexorable emperors commonly allowed. And this fatal fault of cruelty, which in others sometimes grew less with advancing age, in his case became more violent, since a group of flatterers intensified his stubborn resolution.

Prominent among these was the state secretary Paulus, a native of Spain, a kind of viper, whose countenance concealed his character, but who was extremely clever in scenting out hidden means of danger for others. When he had been sent to **Britain** to fetch some officers who had dared to conspire with Magnentius, since they could make no resistance he autocratically exceeded his instructions and, like a flood, suddenly overwhelmed the fortunes of many, making his way amid manifold slaughter and destruction, imprisoning freeborn men and even degrading some with handcuffs; as a matter of fact, he patched together many accusations with utter disregard of the truth, and to him was due an impious crime, which fixed an eternal stain upon the time of Constantius. Martinus, who was governing those provinces as substitute for the prefects, deeply deplored the woes suffered by innocent men; and after often begging that those who were free from any reproach should be spared, when he failed in his appeal he threatened to retire, in the hope that, at least through fear of this, that malevolent man-hunter might finally cease to expose to open danger men naturally given to peace. Paulus thought that this would interfere with his profession, and being a formidable artist in devising complications, for which reason he was nicknamed "The Chain," since the substitute continued to defend those whom he was appointed to govern, Paulus involved even him in the common peril, threatening to bring him also in chains to the emperor's court, along with the tribunes and many others. Thereupon Martinus, alarmed at this threat, and thinking swift death imminent, drew his sword and attacked that same Paulus. But since the weakness of his hand prevented him from dealing a fatal blow, he plunged the sword which he had

already drawn into his own side. And by that most ignominious death there passed from life a most just ruler, who had dared to lighten the unhappy lot of many. After perpetrating these atrocious crimes, Paulus, stained with blood, returned to the emperor's camp, bringing with him many men almost covered with chains and in a state of pitiful filth and wretchedness. On their arrival, the racks were made ready and the executioner prepared his hooks and other instruments of torture. Many of the prisoners were proscribed, others driven into exile; to some the sword dealt the penalty of death. For no one easily recalls the acquittal of anyone in the time of Constantius when an accusation against him had even been whispered.