

BODMIN OLD CORNWALL SOCIETY

ST GURON'S WELL, BODMIN

Looking into the misty past, about the middle of the sixth century of Christ's birth, we see dimly a saintly man, Guron by name, pushing his way, the first Christian missionary to these parts, and settling at Bodmin. The place was then, probably, a deep-wooded glen, through which a constant rivulet ran, surrounded by trackless moors. Here rude Britons dwelt, and fed their cattle on the broad moorlands; part venatic, part pastoral, in their habits: heathen, nearly naked and savage.

St Guron settled down among these wild Celts, unarmed except by the weapons of faith, and the example of a sober, religious, and useful life, assisted possibly by some of the leech's cunning.

He soon commended himself to the rude inhabitants of the valley, and gradually taught them the precepts of Christianity. After a few years he was joined by another holy man, St. Petroc, who watered the seed thus sown, and from the small beginnings of this simple hermit's cell, lived to found a religious house, which grew to be, later, a priory of Augustinian monks, St Guron resigning his missionary charge to the new-comer. If we may judge from all that is left us of this age before records, the pioneer St. Guron started in search of a fresh field of

labour, and found it at Gorran (St. Guron) on the southern coast of Cornwall.

We know enough of the simple lives of these early apostles to show that in their choice of a spot for settlement they generally pitched their tents, or built their hut, or digged their cell near a constant spring of water – one of the primary necessities of even the most ascetic of lives. It is no great stretch of fancy to think that the good Guron fixed his dwelling by this perennial spring, then welling forth from rocks, under shelter, leafy and umbrageous, and still flowing, with different surroundings, to this day.

*Extract from "Ancient & Holy Wells of Cornwall"
by M & L Quiller-Couch 1894*



**'St Guron's Well outside St Petroc's
Church in Bodmin'**

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