

AMBROSIUS AURELIANUS (c. 475), British leader

Name: Ambrosius Aurelianus

Gender: Male

Occupation: British leader

Area of activity: Military; Politics, Government and Political Movements; Royalty and Society

Author: John Edward Lloyd

He was, according to [Gildas](#), who in this case departs from his habit of omitting personal names, descended from illustrious Roman ancestors, who had borne rule over Britain in their day, but had perished in the struggle with the English invaders. Himself unambitious, he had been drawn by the desperate Britons into the bitter conflict, and under his leadership victory had been won.

He had left posterity, but of them [Gildas](#) had no good opinion, as can be readily believed, if his [Aurelius Caninus](#) was of their number. To Welsh tradition he became known as Emrys Wledig (Ruler), but confusion arose when he was identified with the Ambrosius of [Nennius](#), the boy hero of the folk tale who confounded the magicians of [Vortigern](#) and gave his name to Dinas Emrys, near Beddgelert.

[Geoffrey of Monmouth](#) treats the Ambrosius of history with characteristic freedom; he becomes Aurelius Ambrosius, son of Constantine (not the Great), who is carried off as an infant to Brittany, returns to Britain, is anointed king, and overwhelms [Vortigern](#). He then meets Hengist in battle and slays him; the country is pacified, churches are restored, and law and order re-established.

The complication introduced by [Nennius](#) is adroitly solved, for it appears that the wonder-worker was really Merlin, 'who was also called Ambrosius.' Thus arose the supposed distinction between 'Merlinus Ambrosius' and 'Merlinus Celidonius.'

Author

Sir John Edward Lloyd, (1861 - 1947)

Sources

Theodore Mommsen (ed.), *Gildae sapietis de excidio et conquestu Britanniae ac flebili castigatione in reges principes et sacerdotes*, 40

Theodore Mommsen (ed.), *Historia Brittonum*, 186

Geoffrey of Monmouth, vi, 6, et seq.

Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Ambrosius Aurelianus](#)

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q459606](#)

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