St. Cadwaladr, King of the Welsh

The Isle of Anglesey (*Ynys Môn* in Welsh) is known for its many historic Churches, and progressing further on the island, the three pilgrims went to the Church of St Cadwaladr on the west side of Anglesey. This small village is not far from village of Aberffraw, the capital of the Kingdom of Gwynedd from c.860 A.D. until c.1170. The church is renowned as the burial place of kings of Gwynedd, including King Cadfan, whose 7th-century memorial stone is set in the wall of the nave.

Within the Church the pilgrims viewed the memorial stone on which is inscribed in Latin: *"Catamanus rex sapientisimus opinatisimus omnium regum"* (*'King Cadvan, most wise and renowned of all kings'*). This King Cadfan was the grandfather of the famous Saint Cadwaladr.

St Cadwaladr, the Saint to whom the Church is dedicated, was of the lineage of the ancient and noble family of Maelgwn Gwynedd, the ancestor of many Saints. The holy king succeeded his father in about 634 A.D. However, *"Six hundred and eighty was the year of Christ when there was a great mortality throughout all the island of Britain… And in that year, Cadwaladr the Blessed, son of Cadwallon ap Cadvan, king of the Britons, died…'* [Red Book of Hergest, Mostyn Manuscript 116. 142a0]

St Cadwaladr was a man of peace and piety who embodied the Biblical ideal of kingship, according to which the king is the servant of God and of God's people. He is the Patron Saint of the *Wales Orthodox Mission*. The visit to St Cadwaladr's Church was therefore particularly significant, poignant and deeply moving.