

## SAMSON (c. 485 - 565), abbot and bishop in the Celtic Church

**Name:** Samson

**Date of birth:** c. 485

**Date of death:** 565

**Parent:** Anna

**Parent:** Amwn Ddu

**Gender:** Male

**Occupation:** abbot and bishop in the Celtic Church

**Area of activity:** Religion

**Author:** John Williams James

son of Amwn (of Dyfed) and Anna (of Gwent). He was taught by **Illtud** at Llan Illtud (Dyfed) from 490 on and was ordained deacon and priest by **Dyfrig** at **Illtud**'s request. He went to Pŷr's monastery (again in Dyfed) and on Pŷr's death succeeded him as abbot. He then visited Ireland where there are churches bearing his name at Ballygriffin, near Dublin, and Bally Samson, in the county of Wexford. Returning to Dyfed he became a hermit in a cave near Stackpole Elidr. In 521, on the Feast of the Enthronement of S. Peter, i.e. 22 February, he was consecrated bishop by **Dyfrig** and others. He then sailed to Cornwall (Padstow, Southill, and Fowey) where he lived for some years, his influence extending to the Scilly Isles. Thence he went to Brittany where he spent the rest of his life; this must have been before 547, at which time **Teilo**, who had fled from the Yellow Death, visited him there. Samson's outstanding achievement in Brittany was the release of Iudual, a young prince of Northern Brittany, from the slavery in which he was kept in Paris by Childebert, the Frankish king, at the request of the crafty governor, Chonomor. After the defeat and death of Chonomor, Samson once more visited Paris to attend the episcopal diet of the Franks held in 556 and on this occasion signed the resolutions as 'Samson peccator episcopus.' He died 28 July, 565.

### Author

Chancellor **John Williams James**

### Sources

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Hugh Williams, *Christianity in Early Britain* (Oxford 1912), and his edition of *Gildae De excidio Britanniae fragmenta, Liber de paenitentia, accedit et Lorica Gildae / Gildas The ruin of Britain, fragments from lost letters, The penitential, together with the Lorica of Gildas*

T. Taylor, *The Celtic Christianity of Cornwall divers sketches and studies* (London 1916)

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Samson of Dol](#)

### Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q1269091](#)

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