

## 2 NAVAL HISTORY

home, is a point so generally agreed on, that I will not trouble the reader with any disputes about it. But this matter is carried much too far, when it is asserted, that the histories of those times deserve not either reading, or notice; that they are mere fables, and idle tales, void of all authority or probability.

It is true, that this lofty stile is highly taking with critics, who very readily reject what they cannot understand, but this may be sometimes too hastily done, as I conceive it is here. Camden<sup>a</sup> disliked the *British* history of *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, and his authority drew others to treat it with contempt. But, since his time, through the indefatigable labours of many industrious men, other ancient authors have been published, which plainly shew that much true history is to be met with, even in that book, though embarrassed with fiction. Besides, it is now out of dispute, that *Geoffrey* was no forger, or inventor of that history; but that he really translated it out of the *British* language, in which tongue it is still extant<sup>b</sup>.

FROM this history, which in many circumstances is supported by others of better authority, we have various passages in relation to the naval power of the *Britons*, before *Cæsar's* expedition. Now, that these are not altogether incredible, must appear from the reason of the thing, on one hand; and, on the other, from what may be cited from writers of unquestionable credit.

TWO arguments result from our very situation; for, first, the people, whoever they were, *Gauls* or *Trojans*,  
who

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<sup>a</sup> *Britannia*. p. 6, 7. Edit. 1594. 4<sup>o</sup>. See a Refutation of Camden's Objections in Mr. Thompson's copious Preface to his Translation of *Geoffrey of Monmouth's* History; and the most learned Sir John Price's *Defens. Hist. Britan.* <sup>b</sup> *Usserii Britain. Eccl. Primordia*. See also *Lewis's British History*.