

On the Antiquity of The British Church
the Primacy of Canterbury
and a History of
the 70 Archbishops



Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury

Primate of All England.

1572

THE BRITISH CHURCH

Notes:

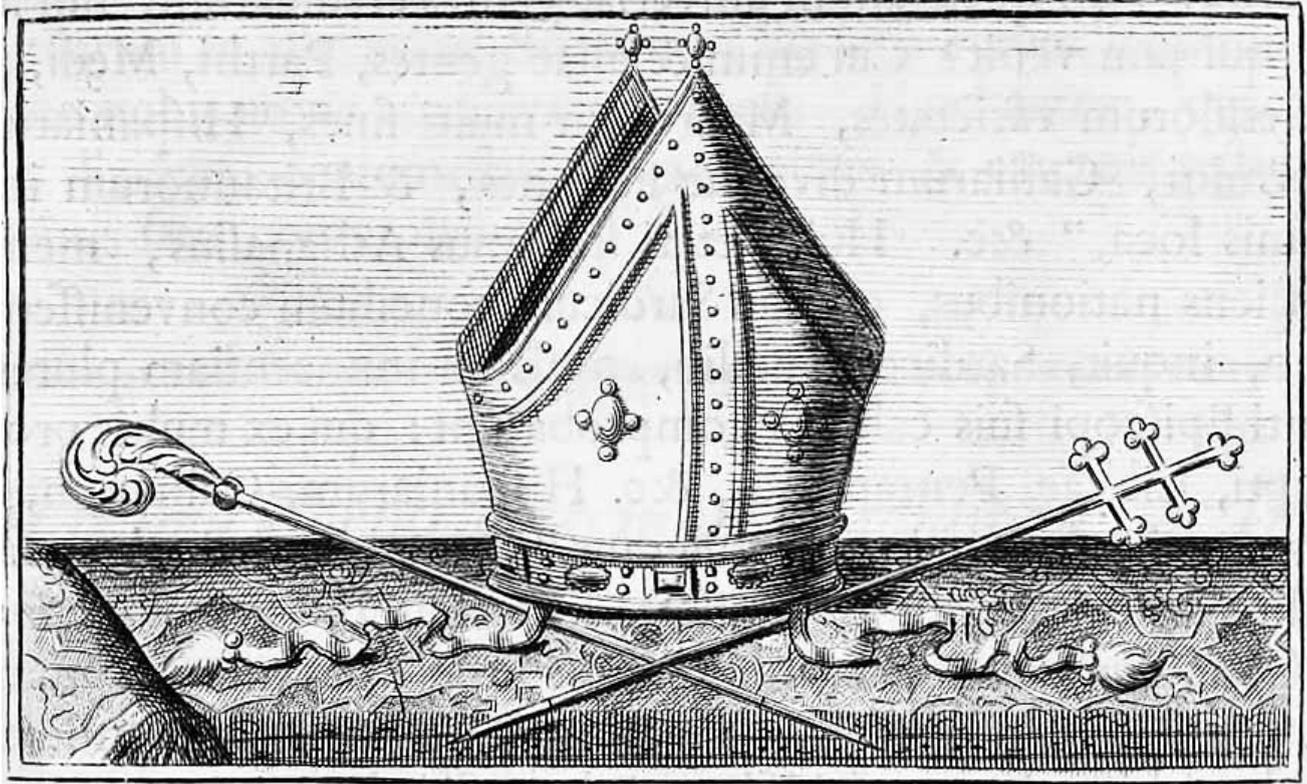
The translation of Mathew Parker's work is an extensive exercise, and the translation is neither polished nor overly corrected. It is largely a straight automated translation of Parker's work which is important, or at least should be important, simply because Matthew Parker was a noted scholar, tutor to the Princess Elizabeth, and following the death of Cardinal Pole the First Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated in an independent Anglican Church, and principal co-architect of the Elizabethan Settlement and its classic expression in the 39 Articles of Religion.

There has been an Anglican tendency to elevate the importance of Thomas Cranmer at the expense of Matthew Parker, and that has been a mistake, for Parker is as important to the shape of Anglicanism as Cranmer.

I have split the work into the sections designated by Matthew Parker, as the technology found the sheer size of the work just a bit too hard to deal with.

I have used the illustrations from the earlier document. I have included the Drop Caps, where they appear, which will remind the original is in latin, so a lot of the time, the first word will not begin as the Drop Caps suggest. I have only used them as decoration, and not as such as part of the text. Hopefully it will remind you of the antiquity of the document, and the language it was written in.

I have on many occasions shortened the sentences, often by breaking them up, as many of the sentences are too long to be meaningful in contemporary society.



EVIDENCE FOR THE OLD BRITISH CHURCH



We will treat the Archbishops of Canterbury, who from ancient times were called Canterbury, because they were the primates and metropolitans of the whole English Church. We will do the best, if we have first declared the origin and institution of the

¹ The Arms of Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury

Christian Church in the British Isles from the most ancient testimonies of the Fathers and writers. Having carefully examined and examined this, we shall find that it is not only very ancient, but also that the Gospel was first propagated throughout the world by the Apostles, and not by the Roman See, as the Roman Pontiffs contend.

Gildas², the most ancient writer of British affairs among those who are worthy of faith, reports that the Britons had already received the Christian faith from the beginning of the Gospel. Then Origen, who was in the last centuries after the Apostles, testifies that Britain was united in the Christian religion. And as for this, Tertullian, the most ancient father of the Church, writing among the Jews concerning the Gentiles embraced the Christian faith, remembers the Britons. Whose words are these eloquent words:

In whom else did all the nations believe, except in Christ, who has already come? For to whom also other nations, Parthians, Medes, &c. as already the varieties of the Getulians³, many territories of the Moors, all the borders of Spain, various nations of Gaul, and places of the Britons inaccessible to the Romans, etc.

Unrelated to this age, Athanasius, making mention of those nations which had convened at the council of Sardinia, says: In the great council of Sardinia, our innocence was approved by more than three hundred bishops by his calculations; The Spaniards, Gaul, and United Kingdoms had contributed thither to the council.

To this is added the authority of the second council of Arles⁴, in which it is expressly expressed, that a certain restored Bishop of London had been called from the council of Britain, and subscribed to the same decrees.

Finally, in the Ecclesiastical History of Nicephorus⁵, there is a letter of the same Athanasius to the Emperor Jovinian⁶, in which he writes:

² Gildas, born C500 died 570, British Monk, who wrote much of what we know before the coming of the Saxons and of course before the Augustinian Mission.

³ These were the people of the North Western African Coast on the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴ AD 353, called by Constantine, and met at Arles, Southern France. However on what Matthew Parker is arguing here we presume he means the 1st council of Arles in 314 AD, where we know Restitutus, Bishop of London was present.

⁵ Byzantine Historian, b 1256 d 1335. The first 18 volumes of his Ecclesiastical History survive.

⁶ Jovinian b 331 d 364. Athanasius pressed him to uphold the Nicene position against Arianism.

Know this, most Christian Augustus, that this faith was preached from the beginning, and that it was the very professed fathers who assembled at Nicaea; which are elsewhere, the churches in Spain, and Britain, and Gaul, and Germany.

From all those things which we have reviewed, the opinion has been ascertained by us, and we have letters to support our conclusion. From these it is clearly evident from the authorities that not only the Christian faith received in those early times by the Britons, but the Church established, and the bishops and individual ranks of ministers, had been sent hither far before the arrival of Augustine, sent by Gregory. And if any one, as if about to stir up a controversy with us, we shall bring back the testimonies cited to that Britain, which is now interposed between Normandy and Guasconia, the province of Gaul; that Tertullian is unavailable to speak of Britain as inaccessible to the Romans, as in this verse of Virgil⁷:

And the Britons were completely divided all over the world.
And likewise Seneca the Latin tragedy:
To surrender the backs of each Britons
Our guides were previously unknown.

For that region of Gaul, stretching between Normandy and Guasconia, and called Armorica by Julius Caesar to the deep ocean, with the arrival of Fabius, then in command of some Roman Legions by Caesar, after many uprisings of the Gauls, surrendered to the Romans, just as the rest of Gaul had completely subsided and subsided.

Nor was it called Britain before, which by the old Britons, the inhabitants of this kingdom, deserting their country, and having been driven out and dislodged from thence, and occupied by the Armoricians, their new inhabitant was thus named,

Anno Domini. 596. More than three hundred years after the aforesaid fathers. Of which we have today the most certain proof, that those Gallobritanni, of the old British language used by the Welsh or Welshmen that remained in this island, still retain the words and idioms, that they may be easily understood by them.

Moreover, neither could the Restored Bishop of London, who had recently been mentioned in the Council of Arles, been able to come from that Britain; But the memory of individual achievements in that former British Church has not been

⁷ Arguing against assuming that ancient Britain was describing parts of Normandy, Brittany and the like, which during many periods were seen as part of Britain.

recorded and preserved to us. But these things, which we have spoken of about his antiquity, are sufficiently proved by both our own and our own, and by external evidence and records.

WHO FIRST DELIVERED THE TEACHING OF CHRIST IN THIS ISLAND.



After we have clearly and briefly explained that this island was formed in the Christian faith by the infancy of the Church itself, let us see by what teacher it was first instituted; it was corrupted, but, once again received by the divine truth, was always quicker refreshed. And first they affirm that Paul himself, a teacher of the Gentiles, together with other nations, and also in particular, announced the Gospel to the Britons after his former imprisonment in Rome, and Theodoret, and Sophronius, the patriarch of Jerusalem.

This, however, which the Roman Catholics consider to be incredible and even impossible, is most closely linked with the truth. For although he himself does not make his journey to this island, yet it is clear from this that Claudia Rusina, the most noble Britain, drawn up in Greek and Latin literature, persuaded the Christian religion.

For many noble Britons were brought to Rome as captives in the time of Nero, by order of Nero, tyrant as Cornelius Tacitus testifies. Claudia, however, received this name from Claudius Caesar, after whose arrival here the Britons, noble friends and confederates of the Roman people, gave Roman names to their heirs and children. Then the same Claudia Rufus, of an Etruscan nobility, distinguished a Roman knight, then married to a tribune of the soldiers, and then a senatorius, departed from her husband Claudia Rufina.

The philosopher Rusus of the Stoic sect, on account of his clemency and meekness of manners, and his ingenuity and modesty, as innate in nature, was called bashful. Who by his gravity and modesty alleges that he reformed Martial, that lascivious and

amorous poet, familiar to him from an old acquaintance, and to reform many things with the pen.

Accordingly, Martial, as well as prudent Rufus, from his refinement, piety, learning, and eloquence, as well as Claudia, his wife Brita, from beauty and creativeness; He praises conjugal faith, doctrine, language and literature. Of which he wrote these poems.

Claudia is fine as Rufina of Britons
Issued, why does Latia have the hearts of the people?
What kind of beauty is beauty? Roman mothers believe
The Italians may be their Attitudes.
God is well pleased, that she gave birth to a holy and fruitful husband
How many sons-in-law he hopes, and how many daughters-in-law.
So please the gods that they may enjoy one's partner
She always enjoys her three children.

The same Martial, who often approaches Rufus to his husband, is accustomed to send poems to the Britons desirous of the Latin language, as though she was in Rome, as Xenia. The same Martial

It is said and sung in our British verses.

But after receiving the divine proclamation, Volterra testifies that both Rufus, the Roman senator, his wife Claudia, and his entire family, embraced the faith of Christ. But that they were not Peter's disciples, not only the time and place agree, but the Apostle of the Gentiles himself, later in the Epistle to Timothy; Whence Paul

Eubulus, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brothers greet you.

This woman, therefore, having been converted to Christ, is no less likely to have sent her Christian dogmas to the Britons, than the Epigrams of Martial had before received the faith. And it is not only probable, but true, to be judged, that there was in such a noble family with Claudia, his fellow Britons, who had been baptized together, by whom the flames of the Gospel had been scattered through the whole British nation, and came to many men by man.

Whether this is the truth, or the investigation and conjecture of such a thing, we see, however, by what aids he endeavors, that he ought to be thought much more certain than that Roman Catholic fiction, that the Christian faith was first begun in Britain by his embassies.

For the apostle Philip, who came to Gaul, and, by the preaching of the Gospel, turned many to the faith, and washed away by baptism, when he had received from Britain a small island separated from the Straits, from which superstition of the Druids flowed into Gaul, out of the number of his allies twelve; he buried it in the sepulcher, he placed it over him.

Who, when they had landed in Britain, preached the faith of Christ with a strong breast. Anno Domini 63. By their preaching, though King Arviragus with his nobles did not wish to be led away from the ancient religion of the Druids; and yet, influenced by the reputation of such a protracted sojourn, and of their modesty, and meekness of manners, when they were seeking a certain island, situated in the confines of his country, he then granted it, indeed, to be inhabited and cultivated by the inhabitants of Insuvitrim⁸.

And then the other two kings, influenced by this example, and by the piety and integrity of Joseph and his allies, gave and confirmed to each of them twelve hides of the earth, according to the custom of the nation, according to the manner of their diet. And so they still retain the name of the twelve hides.

On this island, however, they report that a temple was erected by the divine advice of Joseph and his companions. Of which Augustine was sent hither by Pope Gregory, and was the first, as will soon be evident, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Surrounded by lakes of rivers, and suitable for the many uses of human need, and dedicated to sacred gifts, which is most important. In it, indeed, of the first Catholic law, they found a church built by no art of men, as they say, nay, they found the salvation of man prepared by God:

This is Augustine. But the place itself, after Josephus and his companions departed from life, after some years had elapsed, having been deserted by the inhabitants, was changed into a desert, but the temple remained, in the times of King Lucius; by this chance he was found again, and was again occupied by Christians.

Paganus and Deruvian⁹, ambassadors to Pope Eleutherius¹⁰, king of Britain to Lucius, of whom we shall be told in the seventh narration, perceiving something at Rome

⁸ This may be an Island in the river near Winchester, or perhaps nearer Canterbury.

⁹ Sent by Pope Eleutherius at the request of King Lucius.

¹⁰ Pope 174-189 AD. .

concerning this former settlement of Joseph¹¹ and his allies in Britain, earnestly inquired of the place itself; penetrating into the desert, and thoroughly studying it, they found that church which the inhabitants of the neighboring country had once built by the disciples of Christ, and founded upon human salvation.

By this and other evidence it is easily understood that this same dwelling was Joseph's and the allies' dwelling in Britain, from which they received at Rome. For it can not be untrue to the truth that Joseph, as well as other apostles and disciples scattered around the whole world, had done what they had done for Christ in individual countries, and what they had felt either adverse or advantageous by messengers and letters, that he had informed his colleagues, both in Rome and in Jerusalem, and in other places; or that Eleutherius, the ambassadors, wished to trace out those places which they received from the ancient writings of the Christians before they were cultivated in Rome.

In this place, therefore, the aforesaid ambassadors made a stay of nine years, where they received not only the achievements of Joseph for the Christian faith, the history of the impact of Joseph and his allies, the royal grant, the building of the temple, and some other ancient writings; whose memory has been brought down to him, as we have said, to Augustine the Roman himself, and has been set down by him, lest any one should suspect that this is fable, or handed down by a recent author; that it was rashly sent out, but that it was requested from the very beginning, and that the most ancient writers, who succeeded one another, had come to our age and knowledge.

Others report that Simon the Zealot came into Britain, and first announced the Gospel: of which both may be true. For Joseph's companions are not mentioned, among whom it is likely that he was Simon. Joseph, therefore, of whom he is informed by his faith, and by the preaching of his allies, spread the Gospel through this island, as passing through a great many converts and overflowing with baptism, and having been carried over, he at length arrived at the King himself; in which once a noble monastery of the monastic family of the Benedictine order was erected, and still exists a magnificent temple, to be cultivated and inhabited.

For this place the name Glasconia in the desert of Avalonia, called ynŷr in the British. j. The island of apples: for Aval Apple, ynys means an island in the British language.

Here Joseph settled down for the rest of his life, and was the first to lay the foundations of the church on this island; and there, dying, he was buried in the year 76

¹¹ I think this refers to Joseph of Aramathea.

of Christ. From this first planting of the Gospel, certain relics have lasted until the times of king Lucius: which, as will soon be evident, they have published the latent and seasoned Gospel, again by the author's own king. But under Claudius Caesar the lamp of the Gospel was first lit in Britain by Joseph's voice.

HOW AND WHEN KING LUCIUS OF BRITAIN WAS BAPTIZED AS A BELIEVER IN THE GOSPEL.



Lucius¹² Coillius, king of Britain, distinguished for his piety and prowess, was the only son of the prince advancing to his paternal praise for his excellence, and the other, rightly called Pius Coillus, began the royal scepter in the year 179, after the coming to Christ, and held it for twelve years.

In his time, when the Roman edict from the provinces was taking precautions against the Druids to abolish the superstition, he began to deliberate in the first place on the religion and the true worship of God, for which he was very zealous. This was the discipline of the Druids, invented in ancient times in Britain, and then transferred to Gaul.

They not only presided over the sacrifices, but established controversies over all public and private matters. If any of them had not obeyed their decrees, they immediately forbade the sacrifices, a punishment which was the most grievous for them. For such interdicts were reckoned among the number of the impious and the wicked, from whom all departed, and avoided the meeting and the alliances of their allies.

The Druids, however, did not take part in war, nor pay tributes; but by many privileges and immunities, they moved a great number of the youth to learn the discipline. They taught that souls do not perish, but migrate from the body to body, as Pythagoras

¹² 2nd century Welsh King, generally credited with introducing Christianity at an official level. There is little contemporary evidence and he is often thought to be Legendary. MP takes this as fact.

affirmed, and they disputed about the motion of the heavens and of the faiths, of the greatness of the world, the nature of things, and the strength and power of their Gods.

Among these they worshiped Mercury, as the inventor of all arts, as a guide to roads and roads, and who possessed the greatest influence on gain and trade. Of Jupiter, Apollo, and Mars, and the rest had the same opinion among the other nations: but their doctrine was not commanded by letters, but by memory, lest it should either be uttered among the common people, or the youth, by the confidence of letters, which he learned, should give up their diligence, and memory.

At the same time he was a supporter of Lucius and of the Romans, and was united to Caesar with the greatest kindness and intimacy with Marcus Antoninus Vero. By his authority and decree, when the religion of such authority was to be overthrown, which surpassed the memory of all; as it seems, at length he assented by faith, but not from his own countrymen and countrymen, and of the lowest and most abject condition, according to the custom of the Jews, whose Christian simplicity offended the weak minds; And when he learned that not only Adrian and Antoninus Pius, the most equal Caesars, had taken precautions by his edict, that he might no longer be punished for such great punishments against the Christian religion, but also that several noble Romans had received the same faith from the Roman Pontiff; to be inaugurated in the same faith under Eleutherius, then the Roman Pontiff. To whom the illustrious and eloquent men Elvanus Avalonius, and Meduinus the Belgae, by whom he was led over to the faith of Christ by the Druids, bequeathed them with letters and commandments. In these he requested that he, already imbued with Christian doctrine, send to him messengers and ambassadors by whom he should be washed in baptism; But Bishop Eleutherius Pius, zealous in spreading the word of God rather than in the purpose of explaining his own reputation, judged with the greatest joy, because of the great joy that Christ had gained as King, that his work was vain and superfluous, inasmuch as it was demanded.

But he did not ascribe to him or claim the praise of the British conversion, but wrote back to the King that he had received the greatest pleasure from his faith in Christ. But the Roman laws desired by him were not necessary for the Christian republic, in which many things were sanctioned by Christians not to be observed. Nor could he lack the authority or his works in the founding of laws, which would have both pages of the Old and New Testament, from which, by the council of nobles, the laws could be employed, holy and lacking in every vice; and he represented his power to his people. In his epistle, because it is so rare and august, we shall insert the whole series.

You have asked of us Roman laws and of Caesar to be transmitted to you, by which you were willing to use in the kingdom of Britain. We can always reject the Roman laws and the laws of Caesar: by no means the law of God. For you have recently received by divine mercy the law and faith of Christ in the kingdom of Britain. You have at your disposal each page in the kingdom: from them, by the grace of God, receive the law through the council of your kingdom, and through it the patience of God, your kingdom, you kings of Britain.

But you are the vicar of God in the kingdom according to the prophet King: the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of the world and all who dwell in it. your eyes. And again, according to the king's prophet: God is thy judgment, &c. For it is not Caesar's judgment nor justice; for the king's sons are Christian nations, and the people of the kingdom, who live under your protection and peace and kingdom, and take their stand, according to the Gospel: As a hen gathers chickens under her wings, &c. The nations of the kingdom of Britain, and your people, are yours, and those whom you ought to have divided into one, to bring together for harmony and peace, and for faith, and for the law of Christ, and for the holy Church to reign forever in him, whose vicar you are in the aforesaid kingdom, who is with the Father, and the Son, &c.

Elvanus and Meduinus returned With these answers. There is no doubt by whom Lucius was baptized. For there are some who write that Lucius was baptized by Elvanus and Meduinus, their orators already returning to Eleutherius with the above reply. Of these, Elvanus set out from that marshlands, the college of Joseph's disciples and successors in Avalonia, and he was created bishop by Eleutherius, who had planted the first seeds of the Gospel planted by Joseph in the wider fields of Britain.

The other was Meduinus Belgius, who had attached eloquence to the sacred science, and the fluency of British speech, and the faculty of speech, a teacher of the British race, who was ordained by the same Eleutherius, to preach faith in Christ, not in any certain and designated place, but everywhere throughout the whole island. Others report that Phaganus and Deruvianus were Romans, Elvanus and Meduinus, of the same Eleutherius, men, and skilled in the sacred writings and in the administration of the Church, as ovens, or co-workers, whose industry and skill in accomplishing so great a work, as in the eradication of the ancient Druids.

It would be necessary for the Britons, an innate and innate error, to be placed at that time in upholding the discipline of the Christian religion. From these Lucius, with whom was attached at the time, the authority of his own nation did not prevail in such a great matter, was baptized according to the Roman custom and rite. Nor is it dissimilar, but that Elvanus and Meduinus, who were inclined to all diligence and zeal

to entice their King to the Gospel, were to carry on and indulge in him the custom, as he granted them by the Romans, to whom so much grace and authority, that by their aid he had been carried up to the British empire, rather that he should be baptized by them, lest they should alienate him from the institution.

Therefore, we may grant that Lucius was baptized by the Romans, whose fame, not in principality and dominion at that time, but of frequent martyrdom, constancy, and sincere discipline of the faith, was most celebrated throughout the whole Christian world; In this, however, all the testimonies of any writers agree and conspire, that Lucius understood the Christian faith before his own people, before he had implored the assistance of the Roman Pontiff; although it may be seen as delightful to them, as to whom the Romans were so popular, and useful for accomplishing that which he instituted in religion.

Having, therefore, been baptized in this manner, and the Christian faith went from strength to strength, Lucius, as well as his Elvanus and Meduinus, as well as the Romans, summoned the Pagan and Deruvian to the council. And first, when all the discipline of the Druids exploded, he appointed Christian teachers to illustrate the Gospel in the place of the Druids throughout the whole island; then he filled the synagogues and temples of false gods which the Druids worshiped.

He ordained twenty-eight of the episcopate, and divided them into three provinces, of which he placed the metropolitan in the three most celebrated states of the kingdom. The first was the province of London, which was confined to the territories of Loegria and Cornwall. The second was York, who was governor of Northumbria, Deira, and Albany. The third province was in Cambria, the prefecture of which he sat in the city of the legions.

Lucius, however, gave great attention not only to his own, but to foreign and neighboring nations, in establishing the faith of Christ. For when the divine affairs were thus settled in Britain, he led his army into Gaul, in order that he might subjugate that nation, not to himself but to Christ. There, while he was leading in handling the duties of war, he himself was assiduous in preaching the Gospel. And Merida, was so inflamed with the ardor of the Gospel, that she suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith. In this manner, therefore, the Christian religion, first introduced into Britain by Joseph, under Lucius royal power, was officially accepted, distinct from the individual orders of ministers, and was governed and supported by the bishops;

To each man, thus, the authority of the institution of King Lucius, not alien to him, or the authority of the Roman Pontiff, but only a little help from it, was requested and

desired rather than necessary. That such a divine and immense favor ought to be considered as a divine prerogative granted to this island from heaven. Of all nations, this Gospel, having destroyed the superstitious rites, was first publicly and wholly professed: from which profession, as we will make clear in the next place, it never afterward declined.

THE BRITONS EMBRACING THE FAITH OF CHRIST NEVER AFTERWARD REVOLTED AGAINST THE ANCIENT ERRORS OF THE NATIONS.

*AUGUSTINE CAME TO THE ISLAND LATER AND SOME OF THE
ENGLISH HAD RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST BEFORE THE
COMING OF AUGUSTINE.*



It is vain arrogance of the Papists saying the British nation has been converted in itself, and is without its own faith, and there are many very ancient arguments that are refuted by their own people. For what Innocent in an epistle contends is that all the African and Western Churches were wrought in Christ either by Peter or his disciples and his successors. The truth for it is certain from the Scriptures that Paul was the teacher of the Gentiles, having been called or sent by Peter, who also traveled through the Western Churches, and Spain itself, very far away from the East. He himself testifies that the Gospel had come through him to all nations. Moreover, neither Philip, Joseph, nor Simon the zealous received faith from Peter; but from the Lord himself: by which we have mentioned above that Britain was first illustrated by the light of the Gospels.

But Sulpicius¹³, the authors of ecclesiastical histories, should always be added to this holy observance of the authority of the Scriptures. Sulpicius Severus, who preceded

¹³ Sulpicius Severus, (born c. 363, Aquitania, died c. 420), early Christian ascetic, a chief authority for contemporary Gallo-Roman history, who is considered the most graceful writer of his time.

him, not only our Roman, but that most upright father, Augustine the African¹⁴, with respect to the Western bishops at the council of the Emperor of Rimini, and also of no moderate ecclesiastical state, but of Arianism, who disturbed his whole empire, who was founded by that heresy having severed them, and having called together, he remembers that the Britons, even the bishops, were present.

Of these three, for there is nothing true to be left to be said, they were held to ridicule of the other Western bishops, because when they, relying on the resources of the Emperor, refused to support themselves by the bounty of their promises in that council, these poor men drew up the necessaries of life from the treasury.

The author of the British bishops turned this censorship against the western bishops to human praise, because just as Socrates once thought himself worthy of being entertained by the Athenian Prytaneum, so he was obliged to do so by the promise of a public treasury, rather than by the indulgence of individuals, who owe their authority to men who have always been despised; supported him.

To this we may add Gennadius¹⁵, the catalog of illustrious men, who relates that Pope Sixtus, bishop of Rome, who was before Augustine, at the time of a certain distaste for the United Kingdoms; and worthy of God's teaching. To lessen this opinion of the Roman Catholics, we have a wealth of examples and testimonies, not only external but also domestic.

For to what purpose does it concern the most upright, most learned Gildas of Britons, in such a sharp and violent importation of lots of his time, which it is certain that he flourished a little before the arrival of that Roman Emperor Augustine? What is it about Theon and Thadiocus, archbishops of London and York, after a country occupied by the Saxons, and disordered Christianity, forsaking their settlements, and having fled into Cambria and Cornwall, is frequent mention in the histories?

What, which is confirmed by the same evidence? When the barbarian nation of the Saxons, blinded by pagan superstition, had striven to destroy all Christianity; however, the Christian faith received under Lucius, both in the North and in that part of the Island, which the Britons occupied in their settlements, remained intact; and, as Bede attests, in tranquility and peace, even to the times of Diocletian, it remained intact throughout the entire island.

¹⁴ Augustine of Hippo, also known as Saint Augustine, was a theologian and philosopher of Berber origin and the bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia 354-430 AD.

¹⁵ Gennadius of Massilia, was a 5th-century Christian priest and known historian. Died 496 AD

Those harassed by this cruel infection, Albanus, Amphibalus, Aaron, and Julius, saints and men conspicuous in the preaching of the Gospel, as Bede related it, were candidates for martyrdom.

Then that Constantine the Great, who was the first of all the Caesars to spread the Christian faith with imperial authority throughout the world, was born of a British Christian mother Helena¹⁶, and Maximus, who, having been slain by the Emperor Gratian¹⁷, cruelly and tyrannically invaded the empire, and afterwards was defeated by Theodosius first. A Christian he led his army from Britain into Gaul. Further, by the same author Bede, the fury of the Arian sect rages in the British Church, which was a little later expelled and exploded, returned to the catholic faith.

What, likewise, is said of Conan, the pagan king of Armorica¹⁸, who by force led off Christian girls, and granted them their own children to receive offspring. What about the monk Constantine, who was to succeed King Constantine after being dragged out of the Amphibal¹⁹ monastery, which was at Ventana²⁰ in Britain? What about the arrival of the Germans into Britain, to first destroy Pelagianism, and then to completely eradicate it with a renewal, by which also, and by Lupus, the Britons were aided and avenged by the arms of the Scots and Picts.

In order that this may be more correctly understood, a little deeper reason is to be taken. A certain restored Bishop of London, we have said before, was present at a certain Gallic council, and gave his assent to his decrees. consent and authority should be added. When, therefore, the Pelagian heresy had been brought into Britain through a certain Agricola, a disciple of Pelagius, and had spread more widely, the Britons, long after the death of Guitelinus²¹, although they lacked a teacher. Those displaced, their Archbishop Restitutus²², being summoned to strengthen the recent Gallic

¹⁶ Helena was almost certainly Greek, though Constatine was in York when he became Emperor on the death of his Father.

¹⁷ Roman Emperor 367-383 AD.

¹⁸ Aurelius Conanus was a Brittonic king in 6th-century Brittany. The only certain historical record of him is in the writings of his contemporary Gildas, who excoriates him as a tyrant.

¹⁹ Amphibalus is a venerated early Christian priest said to have converted Saint Alban to Christianity. He occupied a place in British hagiography almost as revered as Alban himself.

²⁰ Verulamium was a town in Roman Britain. It was sited southwest of of St Albans in Hertfordshire

²¹ Bishop of London, of whom little is known

²² Restitutus (fl. 314) was a Romano-British bishop, probably from London, one of the British delegation who attended the church synod or Council held at Arles (Arelate), in Gaul, in AD 314.

councils, begged in the neighborhood of the Gallic bishops for help in ending this spiritual war.

Accordingly, a synod of clergy, implored by the Britons, decreed that in Gaul, the German of Auxerre, and Lupus the bishops of Trecassinus, men possessed in faith and divine virtue, both eloquent in speech and keen in discourse, should be sent to the Britons, so that they might resist this Pelagian heresy at the time of their birth, by the divine word.

These fathers, having been brought to this synod, by a voyage, erected a convent of clergy of the people of Verulam; and that I may use the words of the Historian himself, he says, Peter stood, differing from the parts in a very different condition: thence divine faith; hence human presumption; hence piety, hence pride; hence Christ, on the other Pelagius the author of all depravity.

In the first place the most blessed priests afforded an opportunity of disputing to their adversaries, who by mere exposure of words have long in vain occupied both their ears and times. Then the venerable bishops poured down the torrents of their eloquence with the Apostolic and Evangelical showers. The proper method was mingled with the divine, and the assertions followed by the testimonies of the most troublesome readings. Vanity is convinced, and treachery is refuted; so that he confesses that he erred in reply to each of the objections of the words, while he is unable to answer. The national arbiter barely holds his hands, and bears witness to the judgment with a shout. After this day the unjust persuasion was so blotted out from the minds of all, that the doctrine of the priests might be stimulated by the thirsty desires of the priests. When these things were over, the bishops returned to their homes in Gaul, avenged their works by Pelagianism to the Britons, and, having established them in the Gospel, returned.

There is also a great argument for the faith of the Britons in Christ, the expostulation and complaint with which they acted vehemently against Vortigern as their king, because he had married the unfaithful Hengisti, the daughter of one, to whom the nobles were enraged, when Vortigern had abandoned his royal power, and created his son Vortimer king. Having gained his kingdom, he restored the Christian churches which had been fallen and destroyed by his father's vice, and held his ministers of the highest price in speech. To him, both in order and in age, Aurelius had an assembly to repair the churches of the whole clergy: and when a battle was begun between him and Hengist for their faith, and Hengist was taken prisoner, Aurelius received a council from Haldanus Claudius, Bishop of Chester, a council of murdering him. Then Octa, besieged by the same Aurelius, surrendered himself to his surrender and power with

the following words: My gods are defeated, and I believe that your God reigns. Then, having conducted the war so successfully, and having secured peace, turning his mind to the Church, he created Sampson of York, and Dubritius bishops in the city of the legions. Then King Arthur Christian, after Sampson had been cast out by the Saxons, appointed Pyramus, his chaplain, and Dubritius, after the death of Tremoricum, in their place. What is the reason why Aurelius was slain by a doctor by poison, by the bishops and abbots, and was not so regal and splendid as the Christian custom was buried in the year of our Lord 437. To this is added what is said about Uterpendrago, of the people and clergy created together, and the feast of Easter in due honor celebrating the year 498. Then concerning the fury of the Saxons who devastated the Christian churches, sur. The Christian rite of Uterpendragone was buried, and if, after the death of his father Arthur,

The year 516, in a similar manner consecrated by King Dubritius, bishops and nobles, who, bishops of the Scots and Picts, were besieged in the island of the lake and Loch Lomond; Queen Gwenhwyare, who, out of fear of Arthur, took refuge in the city of the legions at the monastery of the nuns of the martyr Julius.

Nor is it to be passed over that Columbanus, the famous Scot, who came into Britain to those who seek. What so many and such ancient names of priests, monks, prelates, bishops, churches, monasteries, and residences that have existed at any age, though omitted, yet in the age of Augustine himself and those who followed him it was reported in Britain at the time that it had not only always been retained firmly, but had increased and enlarged in each century.

And that lest he might be extinguished by the Saxons themselves, beyond measure, when their fury was over, he at length captured those very men by whom he was most violently attacked by the divine instinct, and persuasion, and faith of himself. For Ethelbert, king of Kent, when the ambassadors had come to him by the same Augustine, it was reported that Augustine had already come from Rome, along with others, to him and his people, to bring a very good message concerning Christ.

I have married Berta, of Christian parents, the very Christian woman, who was given to me by her parents on these terms, so that it may be possible to keep the rite of the Christian faith and religion inviolate, with Bishop Lybhard's helper. Moreover, it is to be thought that very many Anglo Saxon kings were established in the Christian faith, not by Augustine or his successors, but before their arrival, unless we should equally withdraw the faith of the Germans not only by our own, but by external and historical accounts.

For Munster. Munster reports, in the year of our Lord 601. A certain distinguished man, born of royal lineage, came from England, said Offo, who, after crossing the Rhine, vowed to establish the faith of Christ; But it is clear from our records that many Saxon kings were called Offas. But from Bede himself it is very likely that Offa was the son of Athelfrid, king of the Bernicians, who by Acia, the daughter of Ella, king of the Deiri, had borne seven sons: Eanfrid, Oswald, Oswin, Oskacus, Oswidus, Osa, and ours, of whom we are treating Offa.

For both times do not differ; But he received the Christian doctrine from Columbanus and his disciples; which may also be inferred from the other words of Bede. During the whole time that Edwin reigned, he says, the son of the aforesaid king Edelfrid, who had reigned before him, was in exile with the great youth of the nobles among the Scots or the Picts. Therefore they were catechized for the teaching of the Scots, and were refreshed by the grace of baptism. This is Bede. But it is rather certain that Augustine introduced the Roman customs and ceremonies, lest I should say superstitions, and cleverly insinuated himself into obtaining that papal domination in England, and that the Anglican Churches originated from Roman rites, rather than preached the Gospel.

Under King Lucius, as we have said before, three metropolises were established in the three provinces of Britain, Loegria, Albania, and Wales. He presided over the seven bishops of Alban: in Cambria the legion, afterward transferred to Menevia, the same number; and in Loegria of London, since that province was the greater and nobler part of the island, he governed fourteen dioceses. The Christian religion, therefore, from Loegrensis, and almost from the province of Alban, having been banished and dislodged by the Anglosaxons, it was retained in Wales, and was still publicly cultivated in the first Christian rites of the Asian or Eastern Churches received by King Lucius.

The dioceses of Cambria were as follows: Hencfortensis, Tavensis, Paternensis, Banchorensis, Elviensis, Wiccensis, and Morganensis. With whom, in the first council of the clergy convened to him, which was held at Worcester, they preached concerning the antiquity and authority of the Roman see, concerning the succession of Peter, concerning the principality of the Pontiff in other Christian churches, and in order that they might baptize in the Roman custom, and celebrate the Passover, Augustine acted in many ways.

In this council Dionotus, a certain Britan, the monastery of Banchor, a man renowned for learning and eloquence, disputed gravely, and learnedly, about not approving the authority of the Romans among them; asserting that it was not safe or advantageous

for the Britons to depart from the customs of the see of Menevensis, or to bear the pride of the Romans; and even more so, because the Cambri had not yet obeyed the Anglosaxons.

In which all the institution and design of Augustine was employed, that he might subject the English Britons, and the Anglican Roman Church, and the province of Menevenes to their jurisdiction; Gregory, he says, ought to have admonished the Saxons to be a treacherous nation, so that, if they were sincerely willing to admit Christianity, they should restore the empire of Britain, which they had occupied by tyranny against the oath of war, to their just owners and owners.

For Augustine, as Dionotus perceives, under the pretext of faith, confirmed the alien nation in a foreign empire, in order that he might extend his jurisdiction and the Romans. Far unlike Palladius, then the Apostle of the Scots, who, as Polydorus attests to their King Constantine, exhorted with many entreaties that he might not aid the impious Saxon nation against the Britons by arms against the Christians.

Therefore, those things which Augustine wished to decide in singing, procession, voting, adoration, and being sent to temples, to be called by the names of saints, and by superstitious ceremonies of this kind to the Romans, in that synod, Augustine was rejected . Among these there flourished Christianity, which was never officially established under Eleutherius, as we will later explain in more detail in the life of Augustine.