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**ORTHODOX  
CHRISTIANITY  
AND THE  
OLD ENGLISH  
CHURCH**

by

**Fr Andrew Phillips**

# ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH

## FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION

This little work, *Orthodox Christianity and the Old English Church*, was completed nearly twenty years ago, in 1988. This explains the Appendix to it concerning the links between the Pre-Schism Church in England and Russia. In 1988 this was translated into Russian and published in Russia, in view of the celebration of the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus at that time.

In 1988 I was still a deacon and had time to carry out extensive research into the history of the age. This I did largely at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, where I was then living and working. Apart from highlighting the mission of St Augustine, the main value of this booklet was perhaps in publicising the discoveries of scholars, already published in obscure academic journals, concerning the fate of early English exiles to Constantinople. These facts supported the Orthodox view that the pre-Schism Church in the West was, in all senses, in communion with the Church in the East, whereas the post-Schism West was, and is, not.

The first edition was professionally published in 1996 and a second edition in 1998. Both editions have since sold out. Apart from a few minor stylistic changes, this third edition is identical to the first two. Lacking a publisher, here it is now published in electronic form, which has the advantages of being easily accessible and also costless. We hope that it will continue to be of interest to the English-speaking Orthodox world

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St Gregory the Great, Apostle of the English

# ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

## AND THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH

‘The Kingdom of the (Old) English is the Kingdom of God, and God has been pleased to make provision for the future.’

*The Vision of St Peter to Bishop Berhtwald*

### INTRODUCTION

The ecclesiastical history of Pre-Conquest England, and indeed of the British Isles as a whole, is often presented as the history of two great centres, Rome and Canterbury. It is, however, our view that another great ecclesiastical centre deserves to be taken into consideration in the history of the Old English Church, both indirectly at its foundation and directly at its end. This centre, whose importance has been greatly neglected in the writing of Western history for several centuries, is Constantinople, the New Rome of St Constantine the Great.

Indeed, it is our belief that if we are only now awakening to the importance of this centre and all that it represents, then it is also because we are only now awakening to the significance of the first centuries of Roman Christianity among the Old English, awakening to the historical meaning of the Conversion of Anglo-Saxon England by the Apostles. For, as it would seem, there are deep but clear currents linking the Apostles of our land from Old Rome, and the City of Constantinople, New Rome. At the end of the Old English period, these currents appear to be all the more evident, as we shall see. This is not to say that we in any way deny the pre-eminent role of the Papacy in the Conversion of England, rather we wish to underline it but also to make a distinction. This distinction is between the Papacy of St Gregory the Great, and that of Hildebrand, Gregory VII, in the eleventh century. The Rome of St Gregory the Great was an integral and essential part of a Christian Commonwealth, which since the mid-eleventh century has been no more. Since then, moreover, the Roman Patriarchate has itself fallen into several parts, one of them being Canterbury.

In an age where unity is so much sought after, it is thus our task to present to the reader some little part of the unity of that Christian Commonwealth, as it can be seen in the history of Anglo-Saxon England, most particularly at its beginning and at its ending. This we do with the wish that one day this former Commonwealth will be spiritually drawn together once more. Moreover, it is our belief that this will occur when the Western world itself is rebalanced by its full participation in the spiritual heritage of Constantinople, the Orthodox Church. In so doing it will rediscover its own spiritual roots, from which it has wandered so far. This is not wishful thinking, for one of the greatest saints of the Old English Church, St Edward the Martyr, is today venerated in a monastic brotherhood of the Orthodox Church at Brookwood in Surrey. There his relics, miraculously recovered, are enshrined and the faithful come to venerate them and his holy icon. He, we believe, is the first-fruit of the restoration of England's spiritual heritage. May Thy Will be done O Lord.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH

The English people is blessed in having the privilege of venerating two saints, both of whom are known as Apostles of the English, St Gregory and St Augustine. The history of England begins with them.

St Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, was born around 540 and reposed, according to his earliest life, written by a monk at Whitby some one hundred years later, in 604. He is commemorated universally by the Church on 12 March. Of senatorial family, he gave up worldly career and rank to serve God, encouraged in this undertaking by his pious mother, Sylvia. With his immense riches he founded and endowed six monasteries in Greek-speaking Sicily and a seventh in Rome. This monastery, the most famous, was dedicated to St Andrew the First-Called Apostle. It was situated on the Coelian Hill in Rome and he entered it as a simple monk in the year 574. On this hill, prominent among the Seven Hills of Rome and situated just behind the Colosseum, he spent three years in prayer and repentance, like the Apostle Paul in the Arabian Desert. This monastery was destined to become a training-ground for saints and, in spirit, Gregory was never to leave it.

In 579, St Gregory was sent to Constantinople as *apocrisarius*, or Papal legate, to the Imperial Court. Here he avoided the temptations and worldliness of the Capital of the Christian Roman Empire by maintaining his links with St Andrew's. He was accompanied and consoled by monks from that monastery who had become his good companions.<sup>i</sup> Among those friends were probably his '*syncellus*',<sup>ii</sup> or cell-attendant and confidential servant, Augustine. The latter was a pupil of Felix of Messina in Sicily and bore the same name as the saintly Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, some 100 miles away across the Strait of Sicily. Another close friend and also a future saint was Mellitus (a Greek name), later to become the first recorded Bishop of London; he too may well have accompanied Gregory to New Rome.

Their companionship was not only humanly and spiritually consoling, but it also had a certain practical importance, which supports the supposition that they accompanied him. We know that Gregory did not speak Greek and never learned to do so: probably he was not gifted for languages. In any case he needed Latin monks who spoke Greek. Since six of the monasteries he founded were in Sicily, it seems certain it was easy for him to find Greek-speaking monks there, for at that time the whole of the south of Italy was under Greek influence and jurisdiction. Even his monastery in Rome could in part have been populated from the south of Italy and Sicily<sup>iii</sup>. Since we know that he was close to Augustine from Sicily and to Mellitus, with his Greek name, they could indeed have been among his companions.

Gregory spent at least six years in New Rome. Here, he understood clearly that the Emperors were engaged in a struggle with the Persians, which was consuming all the energies of the Empire. He saw clearly that the Western half of Christendom could expect no military support from the East. The West would have to defend itself as best it could. The only way of doing this would be for Old Rome to ally itself with the Germanic kings of the West – but to do this Rome would first have to convert them to Christ. To make friends with barbarians meant first sending missionaries. We may say that the idea of converting to Christ the peoples who had invaded the former Roman

province of Britannia was born in New Rome, Constantinople. It was a realization that marked a turning-point in Gregory's consciousness - and in the history of England.

Probably in the year 585, the future Pope returned to Old Rome to become Abbot<sup>iv</sup> of his beloved St Andrew's, where he had already spent the three happiest years of his life. Soon after his return, and in any case before 588, there occurred an event which the Venerable Bede relates in his *Ecclesiastical History*. It is the well-known story of how Gregory happened to see three slave-boys, from what is now Yorkshire, at a market in Rome. He at once became interested in this as yet unconverted people. In a series of famous puns, he declared that the Angles were to become Angels – he had had the idea of sending a mission to this people. Determined to take the light of Christ to the heathen English, he asked for and received the blessing of the then Pope to undertake this mission himself. With a few companions he set out, but had not gone far before being recalled to Rome: the citizens were threatening to revolt at the loss of their beloved Abbot.

During these years and those to follow, St Gregory was busy writing several works, homilies on the Gospels, a *Commentary on the Book of Job* and a book on *Pastoral Care*. This book was later to be translated into Old English by King Alfred the Great in about 890. Another of Gregory's works, and probably his most famous, *The Dialogues*, is a collection of the lives of the Italian saints. This work was enormously and universally popular in the Church and indeed remains so to this day. It was translated into Old English by Bishop Werferth of Worcester at the end of the ninth century, such was the Old English love of St Gregory's works. It was translated into Greek even earlier, however, by a personal friend of St Gregory's, Anastasius II, Patriarch of Antioch, in the year 602. This translation, made by a friend from Constantinopolitan days, became so popular that in the East St Gregory is known as 'The Dialogist'<sup>v</sup>.

In spite of chronic ill-health Gregory was to write an immense number of letters – even today some 845 survive. He also had an extremely important influence on the development of the Roman liturgy – a *Sacramentary* is attributed to him – and in the development of what we now call 'Gregorian' chant, which of course is named after him – although modern Gregorian chant is quite different from what they must have sung at St Andrew's on the Coelian in Gregory's time. In the Orthodox Church to this day, his name is closely linked with the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts which is attributed to him. This is an office which is served in the Orthodox Church during Great Lent and the first three days of Holy Week. Although this attribution seems doubtful, it is clear that St. Gregory loved this service, which he discovered in Constantinople, and he did introduce it into the Church in the West and the Orthodox Church in the East remembered this.

In Church History St Gregory is also justly famous for having denounced the concept of a 'universal bishop', i.e. a bishop who was somehow superior to all other bishops. This providential event came about in the following way. At this time the Roman Emperor awarded the Patriarch of Constantinople the title 'Œcumenical'. Gregory, at that time Pope, with his ignorance of Greek, thought the title meant 'Universal' and was naturally revolted at it. In fact, of course, this honorific title really denoted 'living in the capital city of the inhabited (= Roman) world', in other words another way of saying 'Constantinople'. Gregory's misunderstanding was however to produce some of

the finest and most Orthodox theology concerning the 'primacy' of Peter and the role of the senior Patriarch in the Church, at that time, naturally, the Pope of Rome.<sup>vi</sup>

In his most interesting correspondence on this matter he says: 'Whoever calls himself the universal bishop, or desires this title, is, by his pride, the Forerunner of Antichrist, because he thus attempts to raise himself above the others'. It is one of the supreme ironies of history that the very see which denounced the notion of universal jurisdiction was the one which 500 years later under Hildebrand (Gregory VII) put this very idea into practice. This action – in the face of a millennium of Universal Church Tradition – was to tear asunder Christendom<sup>vii</sup> and divide the West into Empire and Papacy and later Protestant and Roman Catholic with countless wars of 'religion'. Let us however return to Gregory the Great and his religion.

In the year 590, much against his will, Abbot Gregory was unanimously elected Pope. Although this enormous responsibility as sole Patriarch for the Western part of the Empire daunted him, he did not forget his resolve to send missionaries to the inhabitants of distant Britannia. In September 595 he wrote a letter to a certain priest in Gaul, Candidus, instructing him to buy English slaves, aged 17–18, and to give them over to the care of a monastery. Gregory clearly wished that clergy, natives of the country, be prepared for that mission. But why did he do this in 595?

We may have the answer. This letter may have been the result of a visit to Rome in late 594 or early 595 of St Gregory, Bishop of Tours. It is he who knew of the existence in England of a Frankish Christian Princess who had married the pagan King of Kent. She was called Bertha and was the daughter of Charibert I of Paris. Moreover, she came from a devout family. On her mother's side she had the example of Ingoberg her mother who, widowed, had become a nun. Her great-grandmother was St Clotilde, her grandmother St Radegonde. Since the Bishop of Tours had known both Ingoberg and Bertha in Tours, it would seem highly likely that it was he who informed the Pope of these facts.

Gregory acted swiftly and it was through this action that he became known to history as 'the Apostle of the English', 'he who will present the English people to the Lord at Doomsday as their teacher and Apostle'. In the year 596, 'inspired by God', Pope Gregory realised his ambition of old by sending out missionaries to convert the pagans, to make the Angles into Angels. He knew where to find missionaries. From St Andrew's monastery he took the pupil of Felix of Messana<sup>viii</sup> (today Messina) in Greek Sicily, his friend, perhaps from days in Constantinople, the Prior Augustine. Together with him he took some forty other monks of his acquaintance – not long before he had been their Abbot and probably spiritual father. He prepared them for the great mission which was to be the happiest event of his service as Pope and which within a century and a half would have changed the face of the West. Of the names of these forty monks we know only of the following: the priest Laurence (later Archbishop of Canterbury after Augustine, and a saint), the monk Peter (later the sainted Abbot of St Peter and St Paul's in Canterbury) and perhaps the deacon James (also counted as a saint), and John and Honorius (the latter becoming the fifth Archbishop of Canterbury from 627 to 653), both chanters.

This group of monks, more or less a walking monastery, set out for this northern archipelago in the fourteenth year of the reign of the most pious Emperor Maurice<sup>ix</sup> in

the summer, in other words, of the year 596. There exists a picture of their departure in one of the chapels of the monastery of St Andrew. Leaving through the Ostian Gate, and arriving at Ostia, the fathers took ship and set sail for Southern Gaul; there they seem to have landed at Lérins, the Holy Isle of Gaul. At Lérins there was a great monastery that had trained St Vincent of Lérins; St John Cassian had been closely associated with it together with a whole throng of lesser known saints of Gaul. It was a meeting place, which had sucked in the spirituality of the Fathers of the Egyptian and Palestinian deserts, and then sent out monks all over the West. There St Patrick of Ireland had learnt his monasticism, then St Faustus, the Bishop of Riez, a man of British origin, finally Sts Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes had trained there, before going on to root out the Pelagianism that had bedevilled early British Christianity in the fifth century. It was then a place that already had connections with these islands. From Lérins, where they had been warmly received by Abbot Stephen, the company moved on to the ancient Greek port of Marseilles and then to Aix.

It was at this point that many of the monks, several of them no doubt young and inexperienced, were to lose heart. We are not sure why, but it would seem that along their route they had heard stories of the invasions of the savage, heathen Saxons. Disheartened, they wished to turn back. Indeed so great was their faint-heartedness that their Prior Augustine turned back to Rome and alone went to seek the counsel and support of his spiritual father Gregory. The Pope supported and encouraged the Prior to the full. Instead of recalling them, as some of the weaker monks had hoped, the Pope made Augustine their Abbot and commanded them to obey him as Christ in a letter dated 23 July 596. Upbraided and encouraged, the monks, now under the spiritually and morally strengthened leadership of Augustine, went on. Letters of commendation were sent out from Rome to numerous bishops and secular rulers along their route through France. From this point on the monks seem to have had an absolute trust in their leader. Augustine's commanding presence, monastic discipline and obedience and his zeal and judgement were to prove their worth time and time again in this great undertaking.

From Aix the fathers went on to Arles, Vienne, Lyons the city of St Irinaeus and the other martyrs, on to Autun and Tours, there to venerate the holy relics of the Apostle of Gaul, St Martin. In his eleventh century life of St Augustine, the chronicler Goscelin informs us that they also visited Angers and Orléans and that in Anjou, Augustine worked his first miracles. However it may be, the grace of God was on him. From here the fathers went to Metz and then to Paris where they spent the winter. Here, as in Tours, they were no doubt able to glean further details of the situation in the kingdom of Kent, where they were bound. The long and slow journey through France was their preparation, an apprenticeship which was to serve them well once they had left the Continent for the unknown. Augustine found interpreters in the north of France, possibly they were priests, either Franks or else Saxons from the large Saxon colonies which had settled around Boulogne<sup>x</sup> and which have their English-sounding place-names there to this day. These interpreters were vital to Augustine, we must not forget that the Apostle of the English spoke, initially at least, not a word of the language; the weakness of men yields to the strength of God.

The vast majority of writers seem to agree that the fathers must have spent Lent and Easter, which fell that year, 597, on 13 April, in France. The company set sail then in the month of the Resurrection probably from Boulogne, destined for Kent. How

tempting it is to think that they may have left immediately after Easter – as soon as Easter Monday, 14 April. In any case the spring was to be the springtime of the English nation, the flower of their faith was about to blossom, over the deadwood of satanic superstition. Crossing the Channel in flat-bottomed boats, surely there must have been two of them, they went past Deal, where other Romans had landed centuries before, past the chalk cliffs of Dover and landed. Their landing was not on the mainland, but on the Isle of Thanet, which at that time was quite cut off from the mainland by the River Wantsum, or Stour, some three furlongs wide and fordable in only two places. Most probably they landed on a sandspit known as Ypwine's Fleet, today Ebbsfleet.

The Isle of Thanet is so called because, it seems, the Romans had there erected a lighthouse which shone brightly from afar. The local Celtic population therefore called that spot 'tanet', meaning the 'bright island'<sup>xi</sup>. And here indeed Augustine was to erect a new Roman lighthouse which was to brighten the souls of the English with the unfading light of the Saviour, whose brightness would go out to enlighten a whole people. Not only was Thanet to be a bright island but it was the call from distant Galilee coming through Jerusalem, Constantinople and Rome for the whole of the British Isles to become isles of brightness, aglow with the love of God.

It was this selfsame island which had been the scene of another earlier landing, that of the Teutonic leaders Hengist and Horsa in the year 449, that marked the beginning of the Germanic settlement of this former Roman colony. Indeed some say that Ebbsfleet itself is named after one of those war-leaders, Ypwine<sup>xii</sup>, who was slain at the landing of Hengist and Horsa and their three boatloads of adventurers. Some modern scholars are inclined to think that the monks did not disembark at Ebbsfleet itself but some little way off, at the Roman port of Richborough or at Stonar or elsewhere nearby. Whatever the truth, we can trust that Ebbsfleet today, now inland, is the approximate landing site. In the last century inhabitants at Ebbsfleet farm pointed out a field of clover as the exact location of the landing.<sup>xiii</sup> It may be that local tradition, handed down through the centuries, is truer than the reckonings of the scholars. In any event a chapel was erected at Ebbsfleet in later times, was it perhaps to commemorate the landing?

Today Thanet is no longer an island and the river which used to cut it off is little more than a reedy ditch, though even as late as the sixteenth century, the period of the Reformation, ships could sail up it at high tide. Not only has the river changed its name and form, but also the whole coastline; cliffs have been eroded, sandbanks have formed or been washed away, the sea has receded, dunes, marshes and fields have appeared; the geography, as all in this world, has changed, but the spiritual truth remains: it was here that the Christian Faith was brought to the English people by monks from Italy, or rather by the Providence of God.

On landing, Augustine first sent interpreters to the King of Kent, Ethelbert I, husband of the Christian Bertha, of whom we have already spoken. Ethelbert (in modern English, Albert) and his Queen lived in the old Roman town of Durovernum, renamed 'the burgh of the men of Kent' – Canterbury, and was the most powerful king among the Germanic settlers, the overlord or Bretwalda. Living on the edge or rim (the meaning of the Celtic name, Kent) of England, it was his kingdom which was the most advanced, with continual contact with the Continent and Christianity. He was also, however, the great-great-grandson of Hengist, the first pagan chieftain to arrive with



Horsa in Britain. He had indeed remained a pagan, even though married for some twenty years to Bertha, a Christian.

When she had married him, it had been a condition that she bring with her a royal chaplain, Liudhard, a former Bishop of Senlis, a small town to the north of Paris. There in Canterbury she lived and worshipped at a former Romano-British chapel which she had had restored. As far as we know the saintly Liudhard was still alive and indeed his name is recorded by the church calendar under the date 7 May 603<sup>xiv</sup>. Of this chapel it is recorded that it had originally been founded by a sainted British chief, Lucius, in the second century who had dedicated it to the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary<sup>xv</sup>. On restoring it, Queen Bertha had had it rededicated to the great saint of Tours, St Martin.

We may believe that Bertha was faithful, but probably neither she nor her chaplain had the influence or capacity or support to convert those around them. The time was not ripe, and although there were trading links with Northern France perhaps there were also political obstacles. In mediæval times there existed a gate on the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral known as 'Quenengate'. It has been suggested that Bertha may have used this gate, now opposite St Augustine's Gate, to go to St Martin's<sup>xvi</sup>. To what extent the saintly Liudhard and Bertha had prepared Ethelbert to become a Christian, we cannot know. In any case we must believe from what followed that the King's mind was already favourably disposed towards the Christian Faith, in spite of his pagan heritage and the many politico-religious pressures he must have been under. We recall the words of St Paul: 'the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife', (I Cor. 7, 14).

When Ethelbert heard from the interpreters that missionaries had arrived from Rome, he was surely impressed and he agreed without further ado to meet Augustine on the Isle of Thanet. According to one tradition, this meeting took place at an oak-tree<sup>xvii</sup> which grew in the middle of the island. The oak was sacred to the Germanic pagans and perhaps a sign of good luck. Bede tells us that the meeting took place in an open spot because the king feared some kind of spell or magical incantation. Abbot Augustine and his monks arrived, chanting and bearing a silver cross and icon of Christ painted in the Roman style<sup>xviii</sup>. He preached how Christ the Saviour had opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

Impressed by Augustine's words and the bearing of the monks with their strange dress and Christian spirit and symbols, he must have been especially struck by Augustine himself, who, tradition records, towered head and shoulders above everyone else<sup>xix</sup>. The King gave a measured but undecided answer to the Christian Faith, but did grant the monks buildings and facilities in the royal capital, Canterbury. As yet he did not commit himself but he did allow the fathers to preach freely and baptise as they might. A local tradition records that before Augustine actually met Ethelbert, Bertha had come to see him. Formerly there could be seen a stone at the church in Minster-in-Thalet, where it is said Augustine sat to converse with the Queen<sup>xx</sup>.

From Thanet the holy Abbot crossed by ferry to Richborough, which was then an island between the Isle of Thanet and the mainland. There could still be seen the ruins of the fortifications of the Roman port of *Rutupiæ*, the remains of which are there today. The King received the fathers here, under a cliff under the Roman fort. In later times this spot was hallowed by a small chapel dedicated to St Augustine and several

relics, notably a certain stone<sup>xxi</sup>. It is related that when Augustine came ashore, he stepped on a stone which took the impression of his foot as if it had been clay. In later times this miraculous stone was revered at the saint's chapel, though some were to link it with St Mildred, a descendant of Ethelbert who founded a nunnery at Minster-in-Thanet under the Greek Archbishop of Canterbury Theodore.

Although the stone has gone, together with the impression of the foot, the foundations of the saint's chapel situated on the northern bank of Richborough are still visible. In the centre of Richborough, which was later to become a parish and a hermitage, there was also a cross-shaped mound of earth which local tradition called 'St. Augustine's Cross'. This would suggest that here the monks had set up a cross and preached to the Jutish or Saxon settlers. Richborough was not the only place the saint left behind him to become a place of legend and tradition: Thanet itself was haunted by Augustine's presence, it became an island of miracles, where there was neither rat nor snake and whose good earth was famed for its fruitfulness. The saints were said to have blessed it, as they were to bless all the kingdom of Kent and all England.

Crossing from Richborough to the mainland at last, Augustine must have felt that the prayers of his spiritual father Gregory in distant Rome were bringing his mission success. He was no longer on tiny Thanet, but on the mainland. From this point on he was able to take the old Roman road from Deal and after several hours walking, arriving over St Martin's Hill, he came to Canterbury. According to some, it was the 25th April<sup>xxii</sup>. With silver processional cross and icon of Our Saviour, and chanting a litany, they went down by the primitive huts and vestiges of pagan Rome into the town which was to become the very cradle of English Christianity, England's spiritual capital.

The Sicilian Abbot and his monks were beginning the spiritual conquest of Kent and Kent was the key to England, and England, though Augustine did not know it, the key to the whole of Northern Europe, half a continent, that half which even the might of the pagan Roman Empire had not been able to conquer. This was the acorn from which an oak was to grow, the humble beginning which was to be blessed by the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of Kent was the first of the Old English kingdoms to fall to the Word of God, after it would follow others until all the seven kingdoms were Christ's and the Church would unite them as only the Church could.

It is said that once in Canterbury, the monks stayed at buildings known formerly as those at Stablegate, on the other side of Palace Street, towards the north, where now stands the church of St Alphege<sup>xxiii</sup>. Here the fathers lived the life of the Gospel, emulating the Apostles in the Acts, teaching by example, praying, fasting and keeping vigil. Many admired their simplicity; there were miracles and many were baptised into the Christian Faith. The monks had the use of the chapel of Queen Bertha, situated to the east of the city. Although the fabric of St Martin's church still stands and it is rightly reputed to be the oldest church in England, it has been much changed by the Middle Ages. Nevertheless it is there to this day and it is inspiring to think that these are the very stones that heard the chanting of the Roman monks, that their feet walked here. This is a sacred place. And not least because it was here that Ethelbert was baptised.

Most writers believe that he was baptised swiftly, probably on the Vigil of Whitsun, the Saturday evening of 1 June 597<sup>xxiv</sup>. There exists in St Martin's church a font, and although the top section is clearly of more recent date, it may well be that Ethelbert was baptised in the bottom part of that very font by having water poured over him, just as Clovis, his wife's forebear some 101 years earlier. This at least is the ancient Canterbury tradition. Thus the King became worthy of his name, meaning 'noble-bright'; he had earned a Christian name.

The unknown carpenter's adopted son from, as we say, the back of beyond, had triumphed over primitive magic and cruel paganism, the chief of the Teutonic tribe came to the celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the revelation of the Holy Trinity was on him in the covering of the waters. And all this had been voluntary, not as the forced but fruitless conversions of later ages when sword and fire replaced water and spirit. The work of Augustine, the achievement of these timid monks who had wished to turn back and the prayer of Gregory can only seem the greater to us as we meditate on these events which were to transform the history of these islands. With the first Christian king came the first statesmanship, the first literature, the first art, music, architecture, medicine, in a word, civilization. Even the most un-Christian cannot deny it.

It was not long before Abbot Augustine realised that he would have to return to France to be consecrated bishop. Indeed this eventuality had been foreseen by St Gregory, if the mission were successful. As yet Augustine was, with Laurence, the only priest, the others, as was normal in a monastery, were monks and therefore not ordained – a monastery needed only one or two priest-monks for their needs. So it was that Augustine returned to France, in all probability to Arles<sup>xxv</sup>. Here he was consecrated Archbishop of the English, at the hands of the senior Archbishop in France, Virgilius. Many authorities give a date for this consecration – 16 November (597) – but others have suggested a date in September is more likely. Whatever the truth is, we know that Augustine came back from France, a journey of at least 3–4 weeks from Arles, if he did not linger. He returned to a great joy, that of baptising over 10,000 'English' on Christmas Day 597.

This baptism took place in the River Swale, near the mouth of the Medway, opposite the Isle of Sheppey, meaning the 'Isle of Sheep.' It was here then that the new Archpastor presented his spiritual flock to Christ and they were brought into the saving fold of the Church. In spite of the cold, over 10,000 Jutes, Saxons and Angles went down two by two into the waters and, at the words of their Archbishop were baptised. Miracles and healings accompanied the mass baptism, which represented in fact the baptism of the whole kingdom of Kent.

We must constantly remember that this act was voluntary – but perhaps it was because of, not in spite of, King Ethelbert's wish that the baptism be voluntary that so many wished to follow the example of their ruler. We see their darkened faces become bright as they rose out of the water. At the birth of Christ that year, England was born, the first fruits of England ripened in the depth of winter, a promise of the resurrection to come. England was emerging from the darkness of the Old Dragon, emerging from the Dark Ages of heathendom into the Bright Ages of Christendom.

The next month, January 598, Archbishop Augustine sent Laurence the priest and Peter the monk back to Rome to Gregory with the joyful tidings. Of Gregory's happiness we know. In a letter of July 598 to his good friend and fellow-bishop, Patriarch Eulogius of Alexandria, St Gregory writes of the 10,000 baptised, relating the conversion of those who live 'in a corner of the world' (*Gens Anglorum in mundi angulo posita*). The Pope's pun seems somehow all the more apt when we consider that not only is England in a corner of the world, from the Roman viewpoint, but also Kent is in a corner of England and Canterbury (even more so Thanet and Ebbsfleet) in a corner of Kent. Perhaps St Gregory had in mind the words of the Psalmist: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes' (Ps. 118, 22–23).

In the Old English period, in that great flowering of piety which these islands were then to know, this must have seemed the case to many an outside observer, be he in Rome or distant Egypt. The English had joined the family of the Church. In another of Gregory's works, *The Commentary on the Book of Job*, he also speaks of the conversion of the English: 'The tongue of Britain has begun to cry Alleluia ... the sea that once was restless now lies still beneath the feet of the saints ... the grace of the knowledge of God has now enlightened them ... with all their hearts they yearn for the prize of life everlasting' (*Moralia* in Job xxvii II).

The new Archbishop set about restoring and building churches for the newly baptised. Before this, however, he first had to find a word to denote 'church'. He decided to use the Greek word 'kyriakon', the 'House of the Lord', which in Old English became 'churiche' and also gave 'kirk' in the North and later on 'Kirche' in Germany. First he started to rebuild an ancient Romano-British church, raised up 'long before'. It was natural to him as a Roman and as a Christian to restore the lost heritage. This church was to be the future Cathedral of Canterbury, the Mother-Cathedral of all English Cathedrals. This he was to hallow on 9 June 603 or possibly 602, in the name of Our Saviour.

Augustine may have chosen this dedication because of the Church of Our Saviour in the Lateran in Rome. Others have suggested that it was on account of the icon of Our Saviour which he had brought with him, from Rome or perhaps originally from Constantinople. It was indeed this icon which had somehow mysteriously protected the mission to the English<sup>xxvi</sup>. This church became known to history as Christchurch, and although the present building is quite different, it is nevertheless on the same site. Augustine's Cathedral was built, like all of his churches, like those he had known in Rome; in many ways it appears to have resembled the Church of Old St Peter's in Rome; with an altar at the west end and a crypt. The main entrance was by the south, which is not a Roman feature, but may have been a feature of the old Romano-British church on that site<sup>xxvii</sup>. King Ethelbert also granted Augustine land around the Cathedral and buildings where Ethelbert had made his royal palace. Helping the Archbishop in all ways, the newly-converted King and his Queen then moved out of Canterbury to the old Roman buildings at Reculver. This spot is situated on the northern side of Thanet at the other end of the River Stour opposite Ebbsfleet. Of Reculver we shall speak later.

Also in 598, Augustine and his monks laid the first stone of a monastery. This was to be the first English monastery and was dedicated to the great Roman saints, the Holy

Apostles Peter and Paul. This monastery was founded on the eastern side of the town, outside the ancient city walls. It was to become the last resting-place of the Archbishops of Canterbury and the Christian Kings and Queens of Kent. Ethelbert aided the monks, building 'from the foundations', but it too was on the site of an earlier Roman building. It was sited near the Roman road to London, perhaps, we may imagine, reminding Augustine of the Appian Way. This monastery church was consecrated only after Augustine's death by his successor Archbishop Laurence, although tradition tells us that the fathers were able to live in the new monastery from the beginning of the year 604.

The first Abbot was the monk Peter. He was later to drown on a mission to Rome off the coast of Ambleteuse in Northern France in the year 607. There he is commemorated to this day on 6 January. In the time of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury from 960 to 988, the monastery was rededicated to St Augustine in honour of its founder. The saintly patrons of the Roman Patriarchate were not forgotten. They became the patron-saints of many other churches and monasteries, most notably perhaps of the two great basilicas in London. On the site of the Roman forum (some say the temple of Diana) they built the great minster of the East, St Paul's. In the West, on the site of the temple of Apollo, they built the minster of St Peter, Westminster. Thus the patrons of Rome became the patrons of another Rome, Londinium. We should also mention that the monastery of St Andrew on the Coelian was not forgotten either. St Andrew became the patron of England's second cathedral, the see of St Justus at Rochester.

Archbishop Augustine restored yet another Romano-British church, which had been used since the previous century as a pagan temple. This church, located midway between the town and St Martin's, was reconsecrated in the name of St Pancras (or Pancratius), a young Greek martyred in Rome at the time of Diocletian. A church dedicated to this martyr stood on the Coelian Hill and was well-known to Augustine and his monks in the Rome which they were never to see again. Indeed the rising ground near St Pancras Church may have reminded Augustine of the Hill. The fourteen year-old martyr in some way symbolized the first-fruits of the English nation, of whom 10,000 had dedicated themselves to Christ through baptism. It is said that at the first service in the reconsecrated church the devil tried to wreck the building, in fury that his rule was over. Satan was said to have left his claw-marks on the stone in the wall, and local people until recent times would point out the stone with its mark of the beast as proof of this ancient tradition. England had been delivered, as Bede says, from 'the power of Satan'.

Slightly after Augustine's repose, another church was built in Canterbury dedicated to the Four Crowned Martyrs. A Roman basilica dedicated to them also stands on the Coelian. It seems clear that at the beginning of the seventh century the spiritual geography of Rome was being repeated in the Little Rome of Canterbury.

The monastic services must have made a deep impression on the newly-baptised peasants. The dark-haired Italian clergy, many perhaps like Augustine from Sicily, with their trimmed beards, as was then the custom, must have made a striking impression on the northern Jutes, Saxons and Angles, newly come from heathendom into the Christian family. The mass would begin with the Offertory or Preparation, the people handing up bread, and in later times when it was possible, wine and oil, which

the priest would collect in a basket. When the clergy were vested in their long, white linen dalmatics, a psalm would be sung, prayers and readings would follow and then an Entry Psalm (the Introit) with an antiphon or hymn sung after each verse. Then in the old Roman mass, the deacon would intone the litany to the chanting of 'Kyrie eleison', Lord have mercy. Then collects, in other words, hymns for the day, would be chanted and after them the Epistle for the day would be read.

At this moment the clergy would come in procession from the altar towards the people in order to read the Gospel. All would bow to the Gospel-Book and would venerate it as Christ in person. The clergy with candles and incense would sing the gradual psalm as they walked to the ambo where the Gospel was to be read. The people stood (seating was an innovation of the late Middle Ages) and listened, awaiting an explanation of the Gospel which the priest would give in the vernacular immediately after the reading. After this came the eucharistic prayer and the consecration, the canon, the hallowing of the holy sacrifice through the descent of the Holy Spirit on the gifts, transforming them into the Body and Blood of Christ. Communion would follow, the people receiving the gifts in both kinds as the Gospel commands. Children too would receive communion 'often', as we can read in the canons of the later Synod of Clovesho (746).

There was of course no musical accompaniment to the church services, other than the human voice. For several centuries the mass was celebrated more or less in this way and then gradually changes were made. The old Gregorian chant with its vigorous and melodic rhythms was modified as organs were slowly introduced from the Middle Ages on, deacons disappeared in the Middle Ages and communion was given in one kind and differently as the bread used was no longer leavened. With confirmation being further and further separated in time from baptism<sup>xxviii</sup>, children and babies were no longer able to take communion. Finally the recommendation or preference of the Church for celibate clergy became, officially, if not in practice, an obligation from the time of Hildebrand in the late eleventh century.

In the meantime Rome had been kept informed of all these developments. As we have already mentioned at the beginning of 598 Augustine had sent Laurence and Peter to St Gregory in Rome. It is not clear if they returned soon after and were then sent back again later, as seems more probable, or whether they stayed in Rome the whole time, but we do know that they did reappear in 601 with news and help. First Augustine was to receive his '*pallium*' or archiepiscopal stole, a sign of papal blessing. This was brought to him by a new group of missionaries possibly twelve in number<sup>xxix</sup>.

At their head was Abbot Mellitus, a friend of Gregory's, and later an Archbishop of Canterbury. The others included Paulinus, the first Bishop of York, Justus, later also Archbishop of Canterbury, Rufinianus, probably a later Abbot of St Peter and St Paul's and possibly Romanus, later Bishop of Rochester<sup>xxx</sup>, Mellitus, Paulinus and Justus vessels, to be counted as saints<sup>xxxi</sup>. This holy company brought with them sacred vessels, vestments, relics of the Holy Apostles and martyrs and many books. We are told that the relics included a part of the True Cross, hair of the Mother of God, a part of the rod of Jesse and a piece of the Unsewn Tunic of Christ<sup>xxxii</sup>.

Of the books they brought with them we know of eight manuscripts which existed at the Dissolution which dated back to this era. Unfortunately, given the State-organized vandalism of the time five were lost without trace and then a Gospel-book disappeared

in the late seventeenth century, so we have no way of knowing if these were among the books brought by Abbot Mellitus and his companions. Nevertheless today we are left with two manuscripts. One, a magnificent ancient Gospel has been dated to the mid-seventh century and is conserved in Oxford. Another, at Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, known as the Gospels of St Augustine, certainly appears to be one of the original 'books' brought by Abbot Mellitus. It is then the sole survivor, the remnant; it is the beginning of English literature which began with the Word of God, planted in the heathen North, which was to bear so much fruit in the centuries to come.

From this same period and mission we have a whole batch of letters from St Gregory to his 'brother-bishop' Augustine and many other figures. First the Venerable Bede records the famous Answers of the Pope to a series of questions of Augustine. These questions were mainly of a liturgical, pastoral and ritual nature. Most scholars consider them to be authentic<sup>xxxiii</sup>. In any case they give us a most interesting picture of the missionary situation which Augustine faced and the wisdom of St Gregory who was directing Augustine from afar.

The Pope also wrote other letters, dated June 601. One was sent to the Bishop of Arles instructing him to help Augustine in his labours. A second addressed to Augustine recommended that England be divided into twenty-four dioceses under two Metropolitans in London and York. As we know, the See of Canterbury was never moved to London, since London was not a royal residence for centuries to come and by that time the weight of tradition and sanctity was too great for such a move to take place. Ironically, the figure of twenty-four dioceses was reached only under Henry VIII, who was then to undo the Church. A third letter gave instructions to Abbot Mellitus in his work with Augustine.

Three more letters were to follow. One, addressed to Augustine, warned him about the dangers of falling into pride on account of his successes and miracles. It is indeed from this time that miracles are recorded of Augustine, one for example of the healing of a dumb girl at Chilham in Kent. These miracles had clearly come to Gregory's knowledge. Gregory, as spiritual father, warned the Archbishop that the miracles he worked were not due to his own merits or virtue but due only to the grace of God who was using Augustine as an instrument of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of many. A second letter, together with gifts was transmitted to King Ethelbert. Gregory compared the King to Constantine and commended him to the care of Augustine 'of holy life'. The letter was dated 22 June, as was a third letter to Queen Bertha, though here only the month is given. Here the Pope rejoiced that the light of Christ had at last come to the inhabitants of Britain. He declared that Bertha was the Helen of the new Constantine (as he called Ethelbert), the mother of his faith. News of the conversion, he said, had reached even Constantinople, had come to the knowledge of 'the most serene Emperor'.

King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha had, it would seem, actually emulated Constantine. Having made Canterbury over to the Church, they had moved to Reculver, there to build a new palace. Reculver was their New Rome just as the pagan Byzantium had become the Christian City of New Rome, Constantinople. Canterbury, the English Old Rome, had been given to the Italian Metropolitan Augustine. Nevertheless, King Ethelbert has retained, symbolically, a royal mint in his 'Old Rome' – symbolically, because it was his treasury, both spiritually and physically. The coins he minted carried

a design of Romulus and Remus and the wolf on the Capitol. Ethelbert had entered 'Romanitas', Romanity, the universe of Roman Christendom, becoming one of those numerous kings who owed allegiance, albeit formal, to the Emperor in New Rome and the system of Christian civilization, the unity of which was founded on the Church, whose head was and is Our Lord Jesus Christ. One Lord, One Church, One Christian Empire: this was the reality of the day, whatever the immense difficulties, the differences in culture, mentality, ethnic origin and rite. As long as the Church remained One, this civilization was to remain one.

As regards the Roman fortifications at Reculver, Ethelbert was to make use of them to build a palace and then a church, the St Sophia's of this New Rome<sup>xxxiv</sup>, the ruins of which can still be seen today, in spite of the encroaching sea and the vandalism of the early nineteenth century. It is said that until the time of James I, there hung a plaque in the church indicating the resting-place of Ethelbert. This, however, contradicts the Venerable Bede who states that the saintly King was buried in the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. In the Middle Ages a vision of Ethelbert is said to have taken place here, in which the king reproached the priest responsible for his shrine for neglecting it<sup>xxxv</sup>. Queen Bertha was also buried here and in the Middle Ages the relics of her chaplain Liudhard were kept here in a gold chest. On his feast-day these relics were taken in procession. Archbishop Augustine was buried in the same monastic church and, according to Bede, an altar was dedicated to St Gregory of Rome where every Saturday a priest commemorated them. This was to last until the Synod of Clovesho in 747 when their holiness was officially recognized and confirmed.

Of Ethelbert's and Bertha's children, their son, Eadbald was to become King of Kent after his father. Since he must already have been adult when Augustine arrived, he had been free to choose to become Christian or remain pagan, especially since Ethelbert had insisted that baptism be voluntary. Eadbald had chosen to remain pagan and on his accession in 616 the whole fate of the mission hung in the balance for several weeks or possibly even months. He was to be converted by the dramatic intercession of St Peter and the witness of Archbishop Laurence, and then to become a zealous Christian. The King and Queen's daughter, Ethelburgh, seems to have accepted baptism immediately, perhaps under her mother's influence. She was to become a saint and greatly contributed to the conversion of the North of England. She married Edwin of Northumbria, who under her influence, was also recognized as a saint. Widowed, she founded a nunnery at Lyminge in Kent and lived there as Abbess until her repose in 647.

Once he had established the Church in Kent, Archbishop Augustine began to look further afield. In particular he wished to receive the co-operation from the British bishops in the West and Wales for the more effective evangelization of the whole island. Two meetings were to take place, in the year 602 or possibly at the beginning of 603. These took place at a spot known as 'Augustine's Oak', which has been variously identified as Aust, Malmesbury and other locations in the area of Worcestershire. We shall never know the location for certain, but it does seem to have been on or very near the River Severn. His meetings with the British bishops were, unfortunately, quite fruitless. We gain the impression that the racial pride of the British had been so deeply hurt by the Anglo-Saxon invasions that they were quite unable to entertain the idea of converting them to Christianity.



The situation was further complicated by the fact that their Christianity had been isolated from the mainstream of Christianity for some generations. Within that time there had been no evolution and moreover they had adapted their faith to the tribal system of organization they maintained. Thus old-fashioned and even incorrect practices were for them points of national pride. The Gospel of Christ had been masked by their ethnic traditions. The bitterness felt as a result of the Anglo-Saxon invasions had produced a sectarian, siege mentality, dependent on cultural practices rather than the universal Christian Tradition.

The Italian missionaries with their English neophytes were left for the time being to convert the rest of England alone. It was indeed only some sixty years later, when wounds had begun to heal, that the saintly Theodore of Tarsus was able to establish co-operation between the two peoples. The task of moulding an Anglo-Celtic Kingdom was then to be accomplished by a 'neutral' Greek and the personal holiness of a great host of self-sacrificing Anglo-Saxon and Celtic spiritual fathers and mothers. The greatest of them was probably Cuthbert, 'the Wonderworker of Britain', the symbol of a vibrant Anglo-Celtic unity. It is one of the great mistakes of the Normans and the Tudors after them that they thought that they could maintain this unity by castles and violence rather than by the methods of Sts Theodore and Cuthbert. The present troubles in Ireland and nationalist sentiment in Wales and Scotland are the fruit of their foolish cruelty.

Later writers tell us that in these last years of Augustine's short but so successful episcopate, he undertook several journeys in this island. We read of barefoot marches around Ely, up to Yorkshire and of a visit to the hamlet of Oxford and of another visit to Stroud in Gloucestershire. Here the inhabitants, we are told, were unkind to him. More likely we hear of a miracle worked by the saint at Cerne Abbas in Dorset. Here, as some seven years before in Anjou, a spring miraculously welled up and healings occurred. We are told that our Saviour Himself appeared to Augustine at this time, not long before he was to leave this world for the next. As regards the journeys to Yorkshire and Oxford, it would seem that local tradition has confused him with Paulinus in Yorkshire and Birinus in Oxford.

This confusion is in itself deeply significant for, if there had been no Augustine, then there would have been no Paulinus in the North or Birinus as Apostle of the West Country. Popular legend seems to have transferred the miracles of Augustine's successors to their Father, the Father of the English Church. No greater compliment could have been made than this; indeed if Paulinus and Birinus can be said to have been Augustine's 'children', then it is also true of every English Christian to this day. And beyond him there stands the cosmopolitan figure of the Great Gregory, uniting different worlds in the One Christian Church: present divisions have come since, with the meddling of the kingdoms of this world in the affairs of God.

Archbishop Augustine reposed in the Lord on the 26 May, probably in the year 604<sup>xxxvi</sup>. If this is the true date, he had spent only seven years in England and reposed only ten weeks after his beloved Abba Gregory. Both were to be venerated as saints of God, both bore the title of 'Apostle of the English'. Both had laid the firm foundations of not only the English Church but also the English Nation. In our mind's eye, we picture now the grey-haired Augustine, in magnificent raiment, head and shoulders taller than those who surround him, holding an icon of Our Lord in one hand and

blessing with a silver cross the whole of the English people with the other. Around him cluster the forty monks, his monastery and spiritual children, and then the 10,000 who represent the Baptism of England in the waters of the Swale.

In that corner of England, he had founded Houses of the Lord, called churches, he had founded monastic centres, called minsters. It was from these spiritual burghs that his monks had gone out, preached and baptised and brought the light of Christ to the hearts and minds of the English. St Augustine, or Austin, as he became affectionately known, had reintroduced the vine into Kent and the monks cultivated the Kentish vineyards. Here they founded what was later to be called the garden of England, with its barley, hops and apples. This was indeed the Garden, but also another kind of Garden, the Garden of the True Vine, the Garden of the Faith which reminds us of that other Garden, of Eden, which Adam had known of old, and is now a call to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Augustine is the protector and patron of Kent and of all the English land, and by his apostolic labours and those of his spiritual father Gregory, and those in obedience to them, by whom came the faith, the inhabitants of Britain had come to know the True God. The fruits of their labours are our spiritual heritage, which we ignore at our peril, for if this nation has continued to this day, it is only because we have had the reserves of that heritage to nurture us. And he who destroys that heritage in his soul, destroys the foundations of the house, and then will fall the whole building.

## THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH

Formerly, when men lived in the beauty and bounty of Earth, the reality of Heaven was very near; every brook and grove and hill was holy, and men out of their beauty and bounty built shrines so lovely that the spirits which inhabit Heaven came down and dwelt in them and were companions to men and women, and men listened to divine speech.

John Masefield, Poet Laureate, *The Hereford Speech*, 23 October 1930

In the year 747 at the Synod of Clovesho, under the chairmanship of the saintly Archbishop of Canterbury, Cuthbert, it was recommended that the Feasts of St Gregory the Great (12 March) and St Augustine of Canterbury (26 May) be celebrated as national festivals throughout the seven kingdoms of early England, as befitted the Apostles of the English.

In England the Church was everything. She had given a literature, an art, an architecture, knowledge and learning and she was ready to give national unity. The zeal and faith of the Two Confessors and Apostles of England was making the land into an island of holiness, whose chief export was the saints<sup>xxxvii</sup>, because that was its natural wealth. England realized herself as the Guardian of Sacred Tradition, the keeper of a sacred trust which it had received directly from the successor of St Peter. The history of Old England is the history of its Church and the history of its Church is the history of its saints.

They were the ones who had one foot in heaven, the other on earth, the ones by whom Church life and National life were so closely intertwined, this was a Church which was incarnate and yet remained the Church. The disputes of Church and State were for later, much later, and those only the State, by definition, could win; for if the Church were to win them, then it would no longer be the Church, but a Church-State; on the other hand, if the State were to win those disputes, the Church would fall totally into erastianism, becoming a State-Church, whose very doctrines would be decided by the State and without the spiritual reserves of monasticism to keep its integrity.

In such a brief essay we scarcely have space to record the litany of the names of the English holy ones or to recount their exploits, or the stories of those divine events which saved the Old English Kingdom from spiritual and physical disintegration in the centuries before the Norman Invasion. And yet we cannot but think of certain events and saints who stand out to all.

We linger on the intercession of St Peter who persuaded the disheartened Archbishop Laurence to continue the mission to the English in 616<sup>xxxviii</sup> and again of St Peter who came down to dwell in spirit in his church at Westminster, raised up by the pious King Sebbe. This was the vision granted by the fisherman to the fisherman. We recall all the Roman followers of Augustine, Sts Laurence, Mellitus, Peter, Justus and Paulinus, we recall the holy Abbesses of Kent, Ethelburgh, Eanswyth and Mildred. There comes to mind Oswald, who 'toiled for the heavenly kingdom in continual prayer' and became the Victor of Heavenfield and now stands in the field of Heaven with his great Cross to

the glory of God. There go the holy brothers Chad and Cedd and the faithful monk Owen and the sisters Audrey and Saxburgh with the faithful priest Huna. Here is St Hilda and the humble herdsman Cædmon the Hymnographer who praised the might of the Creator.

We recall the Apostles Aidan, Felix and Birinus, each of a different race, yet united in their task of bringing the English to the Faith. There is the righteous Cuthbert and his soul-friend Herbert of Derwentwater, Cuthbert who ‘served the Creator and saw creation serving him’ as he struggled against the jealous demon-hordes off the rugged northern coasts<sup>xxxix</sup>. We remember the great Theodore of Tarsus, the city of Paul, and Abbot Adrian from Africa, shivering in the cold climate, and yet creating a nation out of warring peoples. And Benedict Biscop, that lover of books and icons, stands with the reverend and gentle abbot-saints, Sigfrid, Ceolfrith and Eosterwine. There is Wilfrid who brought stern order to the North and the lowly Alnoth of Stowe and the learned Aldhelm of Malmesbury, each one so very different and yet each one a saint of God.

There is the Venerable Bede, the ‘candle of the Holy Ghost’; whose soul ‘longed to see Christ his King in His beauty’. Then Egwin of Worcester who founded the monastery of Evesham on the visions of the Mother of God to the humble shepherd Eves. Guthlac the desert-father, who struggled in the lonely marshes and watery fens of Lincolnshire against ‘Black Shuck’, as they still call him there. Guthlac who fought against our ancient foe and who ‘spoke with the angels of the heavenly mysteries’, whose ‘lips gave out a fragrance like unto the scent of the sweetest flowers’, whose repose was marked by the appearance of a ‘fiery tower reaching from the earth to the height of heaven, turning the light of the sun itself to paleness’. Near his holy sister Pega, stands Bishop John of Beverley, the Wonderworker, and Erconwald, the patron of London.

Nor should we forget those who left these shores to live in holy exile: the holy virgins, Sethrid, Ethelburgh and Ercongoth and their companions. Then we see the Greek Pope Zacharias as he blesses Boniface of Crediton, the Patron-Saint of Germany. We turn to Willibrord in Holland and the many companions; Willehad, Lioba, Lull, the holy brothers Ewald and Walburgh the Myrrh-Giver, Sola and Philip of Zell and their helpers in England, Thecla in Wimborne and Cuthbert in Canterbury. Here passes the young Shepherd Cuthman who loved the church in Steyning. And that mild and blessed Bishop of Winchester, St Swithun the English rain-saint, who shone through his miracles. And he of whom it is written; ‘the English land is not deprived of the Lord’s saints, since in English earth lies ... the blessed, the wise and honourable, ever glorified, amongst men as one of them ... bountiful to the poor and to widows, ever mindful of the true doctrine ... Edmund of East Anglia, King and Martyr, who became a true king by choosing, like Christ at Gethsemane, to suffer death at the hands of non-believers rather than defend himself with the sword. We recall those hundreds of martyrs who like him were slain by the Danes.

With thankfulness we remember Alfred, honoured amongst the people as a saint until the Reformation. It was he who saved England from the Danes and then converted the dreaded Northmen to the Christian Faith with the help of Sts Cuthbert and Neot. It was he who restored learning and churchmanship, monasticism and statesmanship, who sent alms to Elias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and further still to India. There goes the holy King of All England, the dream of unity accomplished, Edgar the Peacemaker. Here

stand the holy three: St Dunstan from Glastonbury who came forth in the hour of England's need to be the Archpastor of his people, the father of the new spiritual flowering of the nation, together with Oswald the Almsgiver of Worcester and Ethelwold of Winchester, the Father of Monks. And then anew the troubles starting with regicide, the martyrdom of the youthful Edward, King of England, and after the Royal Martyr, Alphege the Archbishop-Martyr. Or would we think of how Mary the Mother of God saved London in the year 994 at the Feast of Her Nativity<sup>xl</sup>, of Wulstan, Bishop of London, who warned and called to repentance?<sup>xli</sup> Or those Englishmen who went out at that time to preach to the still pagan North, of Sigfrid who baptised Anne of Novgorod<sup>xlii</sup>, of all those who went to Norway, Sweden, Iceland and further still?

In the Old English period we can count over 300 individual saints known to us, not including the hundreds of nameless martyrs. We have mentioned but few, and then only in passing. And yet not many know their names or their exploits and their lives. They represent a forgotten England, lying on the other side of the Middle Ages – they are our forgotten heritage, an Unknown England because for some nine hundred years spirits have turned elsewhere and this inheritance of the Holy Ghost has been cast aside by so many, and the Living God<sup>xliii</sup> turned into an idea, a mere concept.

The Hallowing of England is the fruit of the Conquest of England by Gregory and Augustine, a half-millennium which hallowed towns and hamlets up and down the land between one Conquest and another. This is our unknown, ignored heritage, our spiritual heritage, our spiritual roots, covered over by centuries of secularism in all its forms. England of the Old English with all its faults was also a land of hallowed bishops and holy kings, of martyr-priests and confessors, of noble princes and princesses, saintly abbesses and humble cowherds, meek hermits and lowly monks, righteous families and silent nuns, faithful queens and gentle abbots, who hallowed it from North to South and East to West. This is the spiritual history and the spiritual geography of England, created by the end of the first millennium and which we, at the end of the second, have yet to rediscover.

When we examine the Church at the end of the Old English Age, less than 500 years after the landing of Augustine, after its beginning, we cannot but express wonder at the devotion of the Old English, at the fruit borne of the garden of Kent. For a population of over 1.5 million<sup>xliv</sup>, there must have been at least 10,000 churches and chapels, a proportion of 1:150. True, many of them were very small, often founded by guilds of craftsmen, who built these chapels as neighbourhood churches, but even so in modern terms this would equal some 400,000 churches. At the Norman Conquest there were 35 monasteries and nine convents, numbering some 1,000 religious<sup>xlv</sup>, a proportion of 1:1,500.

Moreover, in earlier times before the Viking attacks, we know that even more lived the monastic life. In the time of Bede there were six hundred monks at Wearmouth alone and at Wimborne in the mid-eighth century there were hundreds of nuns. At the Conquest Norwich had a population of some 5,000; so far archaeologists have discovered the sites of forty-nine churches<sup>xlvi</sup>. In Norfolk at about the same time 1,300 parishes are recorded<sup>xlvii</sup>. The Domesday Book records for Suffolk a population estimated to be 20,000 and 345 churches (though many churches were not recorded, the Conqueror did not find them economically interesting)<sup>xlviii</sup>. At Bury St Edmunds there were thirty priests, deacons and clerks for 342 homes, a proportion of 1:11<sup>xlix</sup>.

Moreover as we shall see later, these churches, mostly wooden, contained within them a wealth without comparison in Western Europe, with the sole possible exception of Rome.

If we marvel at the piety of the Old English, both in the quantity and the quality of their works of art, we must also look at their devotion to Christ through the saints<sup>i</sup>. If we look at church dedications we find above all a great love for the Mother of God and Virgin Mary and then St Peter. This was followed by devotion to the Holy Angels (we recall the words of St Gregory – that the Angles might become Angels), then St Andrew the Apostle (we recall the monastery on the Coelian Hill in Rome), after St John the Baptist, St Nicholas and then the other Holy Apostles. Of that host of home-grown saints the most loved was Cuthbert, that fusion of Saxon and Celtic spirituality. There followed Oswald, Edmund, Swithun, Wilfrid and Chad. The most loved female saints were Hilda, Edith and Audrey. The Apostles of the English were also very popular and dozens and dozens of churches were dedicated to them, which, in both cases is remarkable, for St Gregory never set foot in England and Augustine spent only seven years here<sup>ii</sup>.

It is a strange fact that the eleventh century, the last of the Old English Church, was the century when the veneration of St Augustine flourished the most. Several stories of miracles worked by the saint have come down to us from this time. One miracle occurred in the year 1030. King Canute, like so many kings and nobles before him, was returning to England from a pilgrimage to Rome. Crossing the Channel, his ship encountered a violent storm and he and the ship were saved only by asking for the prayers of the first Archbishop of the English and Canute's vow to give alms to the shrine of the saint in his monastery. During the abbacy of Abbot Wulfric (1047–59) at St Augustine's in Canterbury, a great number of wonders were recorded, wonders which somehow conclude the whole Old English Age, concluding it as it began, with the miracles of a saint of God<sup>iii</sup>.

The landing of Augustine was the beginning of a peaceful and bloodless invasion: the invasion by the Word of God of the hearts and minds of all the inhabitants of England of goodwill. We do not wish to pretend that this age was idyllic or faultless as so many Puritan historians of a political turn of mind have tried to claim. Indeed we must admit that there was 'a falling away towards the end', especially from the time of the fateful martyrdom of King Edward. However that tendency seems to have been repeated all over Western Europe at about that time, though to imagine that the Old English Church just before the Conquest was totally decadent would, as we have seen above, be quite false. Moreover, it is difficult not to look back at the Old English Church and Kingdom without love and regret. This was the childhood of England, when our forbears first heard of Paradise and were first granted a foretaste of the Heavenly Kingdom. This is our spiritual heritage<sup>iiii</sup>.

## THE END OF THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH

I have persecuted the natives of England beyond all reason. Whether gentle or simple I have cruelly oppressed them; many I unjustly disinherited; innumerable multitudes perished through me by famine or the sword ... I fell on the English of the northern shires like a ravening lion. I commanded their houses and corn, with all their implements and chattels, to be burnt without distinction, and great herds of cattle and beasts of burden to be butchered wherever they are found. In this way I took revenge on multitudes of both sexes by subjecting them to the calamity of a cruel famine, and so became the barbarous murderer of many thousands, both young and old, of that fine race of people.

William's death-bed confession, according to Ordericus Vitalis, c. AD 1130

To many it might seem that the Old English Church ends with Hastings and that after 1066 there is no more to say. Those same observers would also say that the Old English Church is really the history of relations between Rome and Canterbury. To these statements we would answer that although the relations between Rome and Canterbury were all important, it is vital to see them in the context of the Œcumenical Church, of the catholicity of the Undivided Church. There is perhaps no greater symbol of this than of King Alfred sending alms to 'India'. There were many other symbols however.

There are St Gregory the Great in his correspondence with the other Patriarchs in the East, St Augustine the Sicilian Archbishop, or Theodore the Greek, Adrian the African Abbot, the pilgrimages of nobles and monks to the Holy Land and Constantinople as well as to Rome, the great missionary journeys of the English all over Northern Europe from perhaps Vinland (Newfoundland) to the borders of what we now call Russia, the presence of Greeks, bishops, monks and artisans, recorded with certainty in the seventh, ninth and eleventh centuries<sup>liv</sup>. England too belonged to the wider Church, the Commonwealth of Christian peoples, united in their diversity by a common faith. The post-Conquest relations between Rome and Canterbury are altogether different and so often are to be seen in the light of a tragic duality, of a power struggle of disunited principles which could end only in division.

This is not to say that Rome and Canterbury did not have any contact with the broader Christian world in the twelfth century and after. Indeed those contacts multiplied, but they were not friendly contacts between peoples who shared the same faith, but rather the contacts between aggressor and aggressed. Nevertheless, it is not possible to say that the Old English Church ends with Hastings, neither materially, as we shall see, nor in its spirit which, we believe, lives on. Indeed it is our thought that it is ultimately to Constantinople that our hearts and minds must turn if we wish to understand what exactly is meant by the 'end' of the Old English Church – for every end is also a beginning, but that beginning depends on the nature of that end.

The landing of William of Normandy, as we know, was neither peaceful nor bloodless – unlike the landing of Abbot Augustine. The Conquest of Duke William was not, as Augustine's, blessed by the old-style Roman Papacy of St Gregory the Great. This was a Conquest blessed by an altogether new Papacy, presaged, it is true, by that of

Nicholas I in the ninth century, but nonetheless new. This was a reformed Germanic Papacy with temporal claims. The Pope was no longer to be the 'Vicar of St Peter', but 'the Vicar of Christ'. It was a Papacy which had already cut itself off from the other four theologically more sophisticated Patriarchates of the Christian Commonwealth, which had formed the Church for one thousand years<sup>lv</sup>. It was a Papacy, we are tempted to say a papism, which, isolated and estranged from the rest of the Christian world, was destined to fall into the temptation of becoming a temporal power.

This was a subtle temptation. On the surface it appeared to be the only way of avoiding becoming a Church dependent on the evolving States of Western Europe, the only way of ensuring its freedom and independence; in reality it meant becoming a Church State, turning itself into a State of its own free will. Its external freedom, politically and economically was thus ensured, but at the cost of its internal freedom, spiritually and doctrinally: the Head of the Church was no longer Christ, but His new Vicar and authority was his and not the Holy Spirit's. Thus in the eleventh century the Papacy with its Germanic popes, allied itself with the all-powerful feudal, military aristocracies of Europe. Of these the most powerful was that of the Normans – the alliance here would be the most effective in helping the new Papacy to achieve its aim.

Scholars of many backgrounds recognise the transformation which took place in the eleventh century, and which was also to destroy the Old English Church, violently and tragically. Indeed a case has been made against the notion that Hastings was lost because of English military inferiority. It may well be that when the English realized that the Normans carried a papal banner with a Papal blessing, they were so demoralized that they gave up the struggle: the English loyalty to the Old Rome of St Gregory the Great was so great that they were completely disorientated on seeing that the enemy had the blessing of Rome<sup>lvi</sup>. What they did not know was that Gregory's Rome was no more – thus their dilemma, thus the Norman victory at Hastings.

Of the transformation of the Papacy and its consequences, scholars have written the following: 'A revolution took place in world history in 1058 ... this Papal revolution was to lead to the Reformation.' (Tellenbach)<sup>lvii</sup>. 'Between the end of the eleventh century and the end of the twelfth, everything changes in the West.' (Congar). 'Early medieval culture and Byzantine were so closely akin ... From the early twelfth century the West is different from all else.' (Dawson)<sup>lviii</sup>. The English scholar Southern describes in great detail the transformation of the West between 972 and 1204, showing how the eleventh century was the turning point in Western history. In English history this turning point is concentrated in the Norman Conquest.

From the English viewpoint the Norman Invasion has been presaged by omens and portents. In 978 there had been the unheard-of crime of regicide against Edward the Martyr. It was his half-brother Ethelred ('the Unready') who replaced him and later married Emma of Normandy, thus setting off that chain of events that was to arouse the covetousness of the power-hungry William. At the same time it was the incompetence of Ethelred that was to culminate in the Danish invasions, the humiliating martyrdom of Alphege, Archbishop of the English, and finally the establishment of the Anglo-Danish monarchy. In 1014 in a famous sermon, Wulstan, then Archbishop of York, had called to repentance, declaring that: 'All must go from bad to worse on account of the people's sins, before the coming of Antichrist'. Then there had been the vision of the saintly Bishop Berhtwald of Ramsbury, some years



before Edward the Confessor had come to the throne. Concerned by the lack of an heir to the throne, he had prayed long into the night and then fallen asleep. In his sleep he saw St Peter consecrate a man as king and then see the king childless and St Peter fix the number of years the king was to reign. When the king asked: 'Who will succeed me?', St Peter replied: 'The kingdom of the English is the kingdom of God, and God has been pleased to make provision for its future'<sup>lix</sup>.

Bishop Berhtwald was not alone in his fears for the future. Many had seen a solution in the return of Alfred, Edward's half-brother. However, as soon as he arrived in England he and his retinue were brutally murdered by the followers of Earl Godwin, who coveted the throne for himself and his family. After this, in 1042, the nation had been reassured by the coronation of Edward but then again knew consternation – the king was childless. In 1057 Edward the Exile, the King's nephew, appeared from long years in Kiev and Hungary. Almost immediately he died – mysteriously and suspiciously though leaving his children behind him.

In 1065 Edward the Confessor had a strange vision on his death-bed. In it he saw two monks who told him the following: 'A year and a day after your death, the English land will be delivered into the hands of the Enemy, so that devils will come all through the land with fire, sword and the havoc of war. God will cease to chastise England for her sins when a green tree in full leaf, felled half-way up its trunk and the upper half carried three furlongs away will by itself join up again with the part cut off and then through its rising sap break into leaf and bear fruit'. The meaning of this vision is not clear, though many have read interpretations into it: we leave it to the reader.

April 1066 was marked by the appearance of Halley's comet, a fiery cross in the skies. A monk of Malmesbury, Ethelmar, prophesied misfortune, bloodshed and the fall of the kingdom<sup>lx</sup>. Only days before Hastings King Harold was given an ominous sign. This was recorded at the church of Waltham, which the King himself had founded. There stood in that church a great marble cross known as the Black Rood, which had been miraculously revealed. The Rood bore a painted, wooden image of Christ, His head raised and His eyes looking heavenwards. When the King came to pray before it on his way to Hastings, the sacristan saw the figure of Christ crucified lower its face towards the King as if in sorrow. This story he repeated several times, insisting on its truth<sup>lxi</sup>.

One can of course interpret these accounts as medieval legend, ignorant superstition, coincidence. To the people of the time they were none of these. And even if they cannot be accepted today at face value, they still keep a symbolic value which learned studies of the consequences of the Conquest can elaborate, as we shall now see.

It has been estimated that during William I's reign up to one in five of the English population died by the sword or in famines<sup>lxii</sup>. This does not include the deaths of the non-English population in Wales or Scotland, nor the civil war deaths in the reign of Stephen, nor the deaths resulting from the Papally-sponsored Norman invasion of Ireland, nor those of the One Hundred Years War which was provoked by the territorial claims to France of the Anglo-Norman kings. Even if the figure of one in five is exaggerated and it can be halved, one in ten is equivalent today to over five million deaths – fifteen times the number of British deaths resulting from the Second World War. The account of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is unambiguous: 'And they

built castles far and wide throughout the land, oppressing the unhappy people, and things went ever from bad to worse'. 'Only amongst the monks, where they lived virtuously was righteousness to be found in the land.' Of William 'the Bastard', the Chronicle says the following: 'Assuredly in his time men suffered grievous oppression and manifold injuries ... he was sunk in greed and utterly given up to avarice. He was too relentless to care even though all might hate him ... Alas! That any man should bear himself so proudly and deem himself exalted above all other men.<sup>lxiii</sup>' Of the tortures inflicted on captives and the gruesome account of William's funeral, when his stomach burst open in stinking putrefaction, one can read elsewhere.

The record of the losses of Old English art and architecture is heart-rending. Today we have little more than fragments of Old English architecture. Of course much was built of wood and could not have lasted, but nevertheless the story of the Norman destruction of Old English church buildings is too much like barbarian vandalism to be excused. When they came to demolish the Cathedral in Worcester in 1086, the saintly Bishop Wulfstan remarked: 'The men of old may not have had stately edifices, but they were themselves a sacrifice to God, whereas now they pile up stones, but forget the soul'<sup>lxiv</sup>. It is more distressing to read of the destruction of the European treasure-house of church art which Old England was. If the churches were razed, leaving us with a pitiful idea of what the former architecture was really like, then, what can we say of Old English Art?

'Nowhere in Europe, even in Byzantium itself, was there a more advanced conception of manuscript illustration and decoration than in Britain. Nowhere, even in Persia, were finer textiles embroidered; nowhere was finer sculpture in stone executed nowhere were finer ivories carved ... they are all quite easy to distinguish as English. They stand out, moreover, by virtue of their quality.' So speaks the art historian, Talbot-Rice<sup>lxv</sup>. Indeed the English were renowned for the quality of their embroidery and we know of a school of embroidery at Ely, though doubtless there were many others. The Winchester School of manuscript illumination was widely known and represented the spiritual and artistic flowering of the tenth century English Renaissance.

The destruction of nearly all of this heritage makes lugubrious reading. 'In the spring of the year (1070), the King had all the monasteries in England plundered'<sup>lxvi</sup>. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries there are unending lists of gold crucifixes, vestments of woven gold, silver and gold sacred vessels and censers, chalices and patens, shrines and altars with their embroidered hangings, silver and gilt ewers of Byzantine work, Gospel-books adorned with precious stones, gold reliquaries and the holy relics contained within, silks and precious hangings, ornaments which in the words of William of Poitiers, 'Byzantium would hold very dear.' In the twelfth century he wrote: 'A Greek or Arab visitor would have been carried away by delight' at the sight of the treasures melted down or sent to France by William. From one church alone he stole treasures worth £6,000, a colossal sum in modern terms<sup>lxvii</sup>.

All this was pillaged; the Old English Church was raped and ravaged. The depths of blasphemy and sacrilege were reached when the Norman clergy began burning the relics of the Old English saints to see if they were authentic; their doubts sometimes seem to have been founded merely on the Norman inability to pronounce the Old English names. Such barbarian acts were not to be seen again until the sack of

Christian Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Later we shall see the Old English connection even here. The accounts of the sack of Old English art are among the most shameful in Western history. After William and his descendants, then the fires of the Middle Ages, followed by the syphilitic frenzy of greed of Henry VIII and the outbursts of the Puritans, then the vandalism of the Victorians, it comes as no surprise when we realise that what we possess of a half-millennium of Old English Art and Architecture is nothing but a single crumb from a huge but ever lost royal banquet. It is an immensely sobering but nonetheless true fact that there is a part of human nature that delights in the destruction of everything beautiful, be it the creation of God or of man.

Apart from the ravages of the English Church and the genocide of its people, we must now speak of the emigration of Englishmen and women overseas<sup>lxviii</sup>. It has been reckoned that approximately one in a hundred (half a million in today's terms) left these shores to emigrate.

Many went to Scotland, where they were welcomed and succoured by the saintly English Queen, Margaret, grand-niece of Edward the Confessor. Many seem to have settled in the Lowlands where they were called 'Sassenachs', Saxons. Others fled to Scandinavia where the English connection was very well-developed. Alsin, Abbot of St Augustine's at Canterbury, took refuge in Norway. Sweden, where English missionaries had long been at work was another destination and perhaps Finland too. It was, however, Denmark which proved to be the most popular destination. It was from here that King Swein<sup>lxix</sup> had thought to mount invasions in 1070 and 1075. These were supported in England, especially in the North and the East where Danish sympathies were strong.

The 1070s were years of revolt among the English, it was the heroic age of Waltheof and Hereward, 'the last of the English', the age of insurrection in the West (Exeter), the North (York) and the Fenlands and East Anglia. Legends were told, that Harold had not died at Hastings, he lived on and would return to free the land from the foreign yoke. Hereward himself, whoever exactly he was, became a folk-hero who was to pass on his prestige later to the legendary figure of Robin Hood, another hero of folk consciousness. Many churchmen also fled abroad, their places taken by the feudal warrior-bishops and clergy of the Normans, such as Odo of Bayeux, who fought at Hastings. Scandinavia seems to have been their main destination.

Other exiles went to the Continent, to Flanders, France and Italy. King Harold's daughter, Gytha, moved further still. She was to marry the Grand-Prince of Kiev, Vladimir, and lived in Kiev, then a great centre of Christian civilisation. Here, having been made welcome, she gave birth to several children, of whom the eldest son was named Harold like his grandfather, but also received the Slavic name, Mstislav<sup>lxx</sup>.

Possibly the greatest emigration, however was elsewhere; the Old English were attracted above all by the almost mystical name of Constantinople<sup>lxxi</sup>, fixed they believed, as Constantine had believed before them, at the middle of the Earth, joining East and West (which Kipling wrongly said would never meet). It is certain that from the Conquest on, and especially during the 1070s but right on into the middle of the twelfth century, huge numbers of English emigrated to the New Rome. Moreover, this emigration was an emigration of the elite of the country. The great scholar Sir Frank

Stenton has discovered that several noble families simply disappeared after the Conquest and they were not all killed at Hastings – they emigrated<sup>lxxii</sup>.

It was particularly the young who left to seek a better future elsewhere. In historical terms this emigration is comparable only to the emigration of the Russian elite and nobility in 1917 when confronted by the Bolshevik terror. So great was this emigration, especially it seems from the West Country, the Fens and East Anglia and so long did it continue, that we must assume that it occurred with the approval of William I and his successors. It seems almost certain that it was their method of ridding themselves of the rebellious Old English ruling class and their supporters among the people. Exile, organized by the State, was after all a bloodless elimination of those who opposed William and the new order. It is no coincidence that the exodus continued right into the twelfth century.

Why did they choose Constantinople? Firstly, because probably already in the Confessor's realm (let us not forget that he was also half-Norman) discontented elements seem already to have left for Constantinople where the Emperor needed men to fight in his armies, especially against the Turks, who posed a threat in the East. Secondly, many Danes and other Scandinavians (such as Harold Hardrada) had formed the elite 'Varangian Guard' there and found fame and fortune; news of this had certainly reached England. Thirdly, what was the future for a young English noble in Norman England? We know that in 1070 a certain Ioannia Rafailis, an Imperial agent or 'prospatharios' came to England recruiting for the Imperial Army. Young Englishmen and Anglo-Danes, especially those of noble birth, would certainly have been attracted. All the more so, since though the Emperor faced the Turks in the East, in the West, especially in Southern Italy, Sicily and Dalmatia, he faced the hated Normans; what better way for an Englishman of avenging himself?

Fourthly, there were those who did not like the new order in the Church or in the State under the Normans. Spiritually they could find refuge in Constantinople and the freedom to continue to live in the ritual and the spirit of the Old English Church in the imperial Capital. Perhaps unconsciously their instincts and feelings drew them to that City which symbolised the unity of Christendom through the Old English period and which had had so many connections with the Apostles of the English, Gregory and Augustine. Of the Anglo-Saxon exodus to Constantinople, the most important moment seems to have been in 1075.

It was in this year that a fleet of 350 ships (according to another source 235) left England for exile in 'Micklegarth', the Great City, Constantinople. The commander of this fleet was one Siward (or Sigurd), called Earl of Gloucester. It is not impossible that he is identical with Siward Barn who had taken part in the Fenland rising of 1071 with Hereward. With him sailed two other earls and eight high-ranking nobles. If, at a conservative estimate, we accept the figure of 235 ships and place forty people in each ship, this would indicate an exodus of nearly 10,000 people, and this was only one group – albeit by far the largest – which left these shores after 1066.

The fleet sailed down along the coasts of France and the Iberian Peninsula, through the Straits of Gibraltar, on by way of Majorca and Minorca, and then past Sardinia towards Sicily and the Eastern Mediterranean. When they arrived in Constantinople they found the city under siege and, we are told, thereupon relieved the inhabitants, scattering the

Turks before them. This 'relief, and it occurred, earned the gratitude of the Emperor and the English were granted lodging and places in the Imperial Army. The English were particularly valued since they were mostly young, many were of noble birth and they all loathed the Normans. The elite showed such loyalty that they entered the Imperial Household and formed the Emperors bodyguard. Their exemplary loyalty to the Emperor of the Romans echoed the loyalty of the Old English to the Pre-Conquest Papacy, to St Gregory the Great, Pope of the Romans.

We read of English troops fighting at Dyrrachium (Durazzo) in 1081, where they suffered heavy losses against the Normans. Again in the 1080s the Emperor granted the English land on the Gulf of Nicomedia, near Nicaea to build a fortified town known as Civotus. We are told that from the great fleet of 1075 some 4,300 English settled in the City itself, which at that time was the most populous, advanced and cosmopolitan city in the world. Further we read that the English sent priests to Hungary, which was then in close contact with Constantinople, for them to be consecrated bishops, since the English preferred the Latin rite to the Greek rite of 'St Paul'.

According to the sources, far more English than the 4,300 who settled in the city went further still. With the blessing of Emperor Alexis, these went on to re-colonize territories lost to the Empire. It is said that they sailed on from the city to the North and the East for six days. Then they arrived at 'the beginning of the Scythian country'. Here they found a land called 'Domapia', which they renamed New England. Here they found towns and having driven out the invaders, they reclaimed them for the Empire. Moreover they renamed the towns 'London', 'York' and called others after the towns where they had come from.

Contemporary historians, confronted by this extraordinary chronicle of events<sup>lxxiii</sup> without parallel until the seventeenth century Puritan emigration to that other New England – which now appears to be the second and not the first – have been at pains to locate this New England. Some have suggested Bulgaria, others the Danube delta in Romania, noticing the similarity between 'Domapia' and 'Danube'. A Romanian scholar has put forward the idea that 'Domapia' may now correspond to a small Romanian village, Domavici, in the Dobrudja. Archaeologists working there have uncovered artefacts suggesting a northern influence. Another scholar<sup>lxxiv</sup> has noticed that indeed lands were suddenly and inexplicably regained for the Empire in about 1100. These lands are situated around the Sea of Azov and the Crimea – north and east of Constantinople.

After painstaking research it has been discovered that mediæval maps of this region list no fewer than six towns with names suggesting English settlements. These settlements on maps of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries are located along the northern coast of the Black Sea. One of the names appears as 'Susaco', possibly from 'Saxon'. Another town, situated some 110 miles to the east of the straits of Kerch near the Sea of Azov appears variously as 'Londia', 'Londin' and 'Londina'. On the twelfth century Syrian map the Sea of Azov itself is called the 'Varang' Sea, the Sea of the Varangians, a name used for the English in Constantinople at this period. It is known that in the thirteenth century a Christian people called the 'Saxi' and speaking a language very similar to Old English inhabited this area, and that troops of the 'Saxi' served in the

Georgian Army in the twelfth century. There seem to be too many coincidences for us to think that the Sea of Azov region was not then the first 'New England'.

The presence of the English in Constantinople and the Eastern Mediterranean, not to mention the Black Sea, is well attested in this period. In the 1090s a French Chronicler records a small fleet of some thirty English ships in the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1098 Edgar the Atheling, great nephew of Edward the Confessor and heir to the throne after him, visited Constantinople, ostensibly on his way to the Holy Land. And yet here too there is a strange coincidence. This looks too much like the visit of a royal exile, cheated of the throne, to those loyal to him. In the twelfth century there were further recruiting campaigns in England. Between 1101 and 1116 a certain Ulfric, a native of Lincoln, came from Constantinople to England as one of the recruiters.

As regards the English troops in the City we know that many endeavoured to defend it in 1204 against the marauding Crusaders<sup>lxxv</sup>. A chronicler of the period, the French Robert of Clair, records that these English soldiers had their own priests in Constantinople. Still, later in the mid-fourteenth century it is said that the descendants of the English refugees still spoke their native language and would greet the Emperor at his Christmas banquet in their 'northern tongue', wishing him a long life, the traditional Greek prayer of 'many years'.

As for those thousands of Old English who settled in the Great City itself, they may have lived in a quarter known as Vlanga<sup>lxxvi</sup> near the Sea of Marmara. Such a large population had been accompanied by priests, and it seems, as we have mentioned above, some were consecrated bishops from Hungary. (The Hungarian connection should not surprise us. Firstly, Hungary was one of the last countries under the jurisdiction of Rome to maintain links with the Church in the East<sup>lxxvii</sup> it was an extraordinary crossroads of East and West, linking Russian Kiev and at the same time the royal court of Scotland. The famous Hungarian royal crown was half-Eastern, half-Western. The coronation rite, that devised by St Dunstan of Canterbury for the English kings and then exported to Hungary, was used in 1059<sup>lxxviii</sup>. As well as this it was the Hungarian court which had protected the sons of Edmund Ironside after their expulsion from England by King Canute. One of them, Edward, had married at the court and the son was Edward the Exile (whose children included Edgar the Atheling and Queen Margaret of Scotland).

It is clear from the statistics for Saxon England that this population together with its bishops must have built several churches in 'Micklegarth', Constantinople. The fact that the Greeks were not against churches of the Latin rite should not surprise us either. It is true that relations between the Roman Popes and the Eastern Patriarchs were very bad at this time, but the arguments here were not against the simple people<sup>lxxix</sup>, but against the Germanic politicisation of the Papacy and the 'barbarian' Frankish doctrines introduced by the new-style German Popes. In Constantinople we know of a church of St Olaf, though this was probably for Scandinavians rather than Anglo-Danes. We also know of a convent dedicated to the Mother of God, called Panagia Varangiotissa. This was recorded until at least 1361<sup>lxxx</sup> and from its name it may well have been founded by an Englishwoman. Of other churches we know for certain of only one but the details are of considerable interest.

One of the English exiles, probably a certain Coleman, '*vir sanctus*', a holy man, educated at St Augustine's in Canterbury, founded a basilica in the City and had it dedicated to St Nicholas and St Augustine of Canterbury, his patron. He had icons painted of the saints, St Augustine's was placed on the south side, St Nicholas' on the north side. At night he placed lamps and candles in front of them. Above St Augustine's icon there was the inscription in Greek: 'St Augustine, Apostle of the English'. One Greek woman who went to this church noticed a wet mark under the saint's right eye but we do not know if this was a weeping icon. It is recorded that this English founder had married a Greek woman, 'well-born and wealthy', and that they lived in a rich part of the City. We are told further that 'the basilica in memory of Augustine and his icon were to the English exiles as a comforting sister of their own mother, their native land; there they often prayed and there, foreigners and orphans, they took pleasure in addressing their mild patron'. In the nineteenth century, the ruins of this church were said to be still visible at a spot known as Bogdan Sarai<sup>lxxxix</sup>. Until 1865, English tombstones were to be seen on a tower in the vicinity of this place and a list of the inscriptions on them made, though this list was then either destroyed or mislaid. If it could be found, it would no doubt be of great interest<sup>lxxxii</sup>.

It is indeed a wondrous thought that that very Augustine, the Apostle of the English, who may have spent time as a young monk in Constantinople with his spiritual father Gregory, the other Apostle of the English, should almost five centuries later be venerated in the same city as a saint and by the descendants of those whom he had brought to Christ. Truly Augustinus, meaning in Latin 'honoured', was honoured by his people: whether in distant exile, or in their homeland, the English had conserved their affection for their beloved Apostle. The print that the Apostle had left so miraculously on the stone had left its trace on the hearts and minds of the faithful English everywhere.

It is also from New Rome that we have one of the most interesting miracles of St Augustine. This occurred in the 1090s when some monks from St Augustine's monastery in Canterbury were returning from pilgrimage from the Holy Land via Constantinople. Setting sail from the City, bound for Venice, their ship with some fifty passengers ran into a violent storm. It was after Whitsun, the vigil of the Feast of St Augustine (25 May) and the English monks were eagerly relating to the mixed Greek and Italian crew how St Gregory of Rome had lived in the Imperial City. They told them also of St Augustine, 'the most powerful saint in England', and how if they prayed to Augustine, he would surely deliver them from the menace of the storm, just as he had King Canute some sixty years previously. It was a Saturday evening and the Vigil began with Vespers. When they came to lauds, the storm fell, the ship slowed, the sea calmed. It was Sunday, the Feast of 'the Patriarch' of the English<sup>lxxxiii</sup>, the Feast of the Roman from Greek Sicily, the disciple of Gregory, the ambassador of Old Rome to New Rome<sup>lxxxiv</sup>. The saint had worked his miracle before the three peoples with whom he had so closely been involved, Italians, Greeks and English. How can we not see the hand of God in these mysterious events, the workings of Providence in the misfortunes of human history?

In so many ways, the end of the Old English Church is strangely not so much in England as on the distant shores of the Black Sea. There the English established a Church in exile, where they continued the traditions of Old England. There they fought to restore the Empire of the Emperor of the Romans, making their way across the

Black Sea, as the Israelites of old across the Red Sea, there they found the freedom to continue to live in the spirit of their faith and culture. The exact fate that befell them after the Fall of the City to the Turks in 1453 we cannot know but must suppose that they were assimilated into the Greek population. As for those who had settled around the northern shores of the Black Sea in 'New England', their fate must remain something of a mystery but eventually they too must have been absorbed into the Russian population around them.

The end of the Old English Church was in one sense here then, in Constantinople and Southern Russia; nowhere else would its rites and traditions have been continued in all their purity and integrity, and certainly not in England, however many were the vestiges and remnants left there. In a deeper, more spiritual sense, however, the spirit of the Old English Church lived on and lives on in Her saints, and this in all places.



## EPILOGUE

Today we are at the end of a millennium. An earthen Empire has fallen, an Empire of both earthly power and intellectual values. The flaws in the Western philosophy had become all too apparent in the world of 'civilized' countries which fought universal wars, carried out genocide, dropped Atomic bombs and listened to its composers before going to turn on the gas ovens in its concentration camps. As a result the poor countries of the world said: No, you are not fit to rule us, you who bombed your holy mountain at Cassino, you have nothing to teach us, no moral or spiritual authority over us – and then they freed themselves from colonial tutelage.

Today these islands stand looking and saying – we must ally ourselves with our neighbours. Here too we find that history is repeating itself, because human nature repeats itself. Just across the water from us a Franco-German alliance has been formed, confirmed in Rome, and has then sucked in everyone around it, including ourselves. A millennium ago it was the same. Our forebears also lived through the troubled age of a millennium and were then sucked into the whirlpool of a Franco-German alliance. But then it was not voluntarily as today, but by sword and fire in division and strife, invasion and conquest; then not into a political and economic alliance as today but into a political and ideological alliance under the new Papacy; then it was not a deathly, mortal Empire that was lost but a kingdom whose chief conquest was deathless, immortal, because it was and is of the spirit. And there are those who have understood that this kingdom of the spirit is a true kingdom, that true civilization is not that of the cultivation of the mind, nor of the refinement of the emotions, but rather the civilization of a spiritually cultivated and refined heart.

This understanding came about through the last War when people realised that humanist culture is unreal without God and its death was inevitable because, having denied God, it also denied man. That war left the values of Europe shattered, for it made clear the separation between the branches and twigs of European culture and the roots and trunk of Christianity and since the branches and twigs were no longer being nourished from the roots and trunk, that humanist culture was left dying. In all this process, however, many for the first time understood that the roots and the trunk of the European tree were Christian and without the Old European values which lie at the base of that tree, all is lost. The Old Europe is that bright kingdom of the old saints, whose flashes and gleams we have so long lived by.

Europe is like a huge building, shaken and felled by an earthquake. But there underneath the layers of ruins and century-old deformations, there was revealed the shining bright image of Christ, almost forgotten, so forgotten that it took the world's greatest War to reveal it. And even now when it has been revealed there are those who prefer to look on at the dust and the ruins of the fallen European building and strive by the power of money to rebuild it, instead of turning to that bright image and building on it afresh by the power of love.

It is our belief that the image has been revealed, not by chance, but by Providence, revealed to call us back to our senses, to the reality and the truth of things, that had long been hidden by the illusions of European humanism, which thought that it could

live without God. This icon of Christ calls Europeans to abandon their pride and to return in meekness, before it is too late, before mankind has gone too far. This icon of Christ, lying at the roots of Europe, has been revealed in the nakedness of spiritual might, in the Saviour's God-manhood, which inspired all that was best in the Old European culture. And unless we build on it, the best, Europe will build instead on the ruins of that old building, which was already spiritually ruined before the War began, and the new building will then undergo the same fate as the old one.

And at this very moment, when the English like the Prodigal are so far from the Father's House, we ask the question how: How will the Prodigal return to his Father? How will the Thief repent? How will Adam come home? How will we dying be awakened? How will we uncover the words of life that we have buried in the tombs that our hearts have become? And in answer to the question how, there comes to mind that company who weep for a once holy land, those Angles who became Angels, those holy ones who haunt our land because we have forgotten, or worse despised them.

They call us back in mind and heart to the Father's House, to our homecoming. They beckon us to return home to the childhood paradise of England, of the old religion, that bright kingdom of our churchly past. We hear their voices in our prayers, calling us back, leading us home to the reality beyond the things of men, to a home of homes, a land hallowed by the saints of old. They, known and unknown, scattered from their shrines, ask for what was formerly hallowed to be hallowed again. And at the head of that company stand the sons of the Father of Mankind, Gregory and Augustine, the Fathers of our Nation, whose children we all are.

And only a few years ago we, their children, celebrated the Church which began in Rome, lived in Canterbury and ended in Constantinople, for we celebrated the 1400th anniversary of the landing of St Augustine in England in 597. This was a Church which was at one and the same time national and patriotic, but which was so because She belonged to a Christian Commonwealth, whose profound, underlying unity was then visible. This was a Commonwealth, because of its common wealth, its common faith; and when the common wealth was taken away, then the Commonwealth fell apart first into monolithic totalitarianism and then into warring, secular nationalisms.

We might wonder if we could not find again in our hearts and minds the spiritual heritage of our fathers, the ability to go beyond the Modern and Middle Ages, to go and heal the wound of the Norman Invasion that has never healed, and in so doing re-consecrate our land and go from spiritual rags to spiritual riches. It would be to find again the silver cross, the gift of Old Rome, to find again the icon of Christ, the gift of New Rome, the miraculous stone with the print of the Apostle and the 10,000 baptized, the gift of the little Rome at Canterbury. To find again our spiritual heritage which we have so meanly squandered down the ages, to go beyond the divisions which separated Rome and Canterbury from Constantinople, and so Canterbury from Rome, by the blood of martyrs.

The story of Christ begins with Old Jerusalem and ends with a New Jerusalem. As for this story, it begins with an Apostle from Old Rome and ends with his veneration in New Rome.

And as for the story of England, it begins with an Old Canterbury, but if that cross is held over our land again, if that icon is painted over our land again and if that print is printed on our land again, then it will end with a New Canterbury. And this will happen, if it please God, when the Christian Commonwealth of the first millennium is restored again, in its spiritual integrity, in its saints.

‘And in that day the Lord will extend His hand yet a second time to recover the remnant which is left, of his people from the isles of the seas.’

*(Isaiah 11, 11)*

Glory to Thee, O God, Glory to Thee!

## APPENDIX: CANTERBURY AND KIEV

To our account of the Church of the First Millennium and the links between the three spiritual capitals of that Christian Commonwealth, Rome, Constantinople and Canterbury, it seems not inappropriate to add some details of the links between England and another capital, Kiev.

On the fateful evening of 18 March 978 at Corfe in Dorset there died a martyr's death the young Edward, King of England. He was the son of the sainted King Edgar the Peaceful, who with his family had been brought up by the holy bishops and monastics of the time. After St Edward the Martyr's treacherous murder, committed by ignoble magnates jealous of the King's generous patronage of the monasteries, the throne went to his half-brother, Ethelred. In history he is known as the 'Unready' or, more exactly, 'the Non-Advised', on account of his disastrous reign<sup>lxxxv</sup>. It was his fateful and fatal reign that led to the successful Danish invasion of England under Canute and it was Ethelred's second marriage to Emma of Normandy that resulted in the Norman Conquest of 1066. Thus, we may believe that had the youthful King Edward not been martyred, none of these misfortunes would have been inflicted on the English nation and our whole history would have been utterly different.

Nonetheless, it was Ethelred who, in 995, concluded a treaty with Olaf Tryggvason, the future King of Norway, who was then confirmed at Andover by Alphege, the Bishop of Winchester<sup>lxxxvi</sup>. This was the selfsame Alphege, who as Archbishop of Canterbury was brutally murdered by pagan Danes in 1012, and who is remembered as a saint of God to this day. When Olaf left England he took several missionaries with him, including two bishops, by the name of Grimkell and Sigfrid. It was these missionaries and their successors who were to establish the Christian Faith in Norway and Sweden and later in Finland, Iceland, Greenland and perhaps even in the Scandinavian settlements in Vinland, or North America as we now call it.

Of these two bishops it is recorded that Grimkell became Bishop of Nidaros (Trondheim) in Norway and Sigfrid laboured in the vineyard of Christ in Gothland in Sweden. There, a little before the year 1000, he baptised the King of Sweden, Olaf Sköttkonung, and all of his family<sup>lxxxvii</sup>. In the year 1045 Sigfrid was martyred by pagans together with his three nephews near Växjö; the church remembers Sigfrid as a saint on 15 February. The pious King Olaf and his wife Queen Estrida laboured to establish the Church in the pagan North. They had several children, among them two daughters. Of these one daughter, Astrid, married Olaf Haroldson, successor to Olaf Tryggvason on the throne of Norway. He was canonized by the ageing Bishop Grimkell in 1030, after his martyr's death at the Battle of Stiklestad. We come now to the saga of the second daughter, Ingegerde.

As a young girl, Ingegerde was already famed for her piety, knowledge and diplomacy. At first they had thought to marry her to the future St Olaf, but he was destined to become her brother-in-law. In fact, providentially, Ingegerde married Yaroslav, then Prince of Novgorod, or Holmgard as it was known in Scandinavia. In Russia Ingegerde took the name Irene, for there the custom of taking a saint's name on baptism prevailed. Yaroslav was the son of St Vladimir, whom the Church in Russia honoured especially in 1988, the thousandth anniversary of the Conversion of Russia, as the baptiser of the Russian people.

St Vladimir himself, as his name indicates (Valdemar) was of Scandinavian origin, and was the grandson of St Olga (Helga) and Igor (Ingvar). In his youth St Vladimir had taken refuge in Norway with Olaf Tryggvason, probably in 972<sup>lxxxviii</sup>, sixteen years before the Baptism of Russia, and twenty three before Olaf's meeting at Andover with the saintly Alphege. In 989 Vladimir had married Anne, the sister of Basil II, Emperor of Constantinople, the most powerful man in all Christendom. Two sons of St Vladimir, Boris and Gleb, are venerated as saints. Such was the Christian commonwealth of the time and such were the links that bound Christians together in a single faith, from Winchester to Constantinople, from Trondheim to Kiev.

In Russian chronicles Irene's husband is known as Yaroslav 'the Wise'. It was he who had the famed Cathedral of St Sophia in Kiev built. It was he who protected Kievan Russia from the Poles, who already under Mieszko I (960–992) had been forced by the Franks into abandoning the pure Orthodox Faith of the other Slavic peoples, in the same way as the Czechs. Yaroslav the Wise moved from Novgorod to Kiev and with Irene he had no fewer than seven sons and three daughters.

One daughter, Elizabeth, married Prince Harold, later King of Norway. Another married Andrew I of Hungary and the third, Anne, married Henry I of France. A son, Vsevolod, married in Constantinople and his son was destined to become Vladimir Monomach, Grand-Prince of Kiev, like his grandfather. Another son, also called Vladimir, is revered as a saint and the Russian Church keeps his memory on 4 October. Apart from these ten children, one of them a saint, Yaroslav (the 'slav' part of his name corresponds to 'Ed' or 'Ethel' in the names of the Old English) and Irene also cared for certain foreign princes. Notably, Irene took her nephew, Magnus (in Russian Maxim), under her protection. Like his father, St Olaf, he had also been threatened by pagans. Magnus, however, survived thanks to his aunt and became King of Norway.

Irene also took two English princes under her wing. These were the sons of Edmund Ironside, King of England, the son of Ethelred, half-brother of St Edward the Martyr. We remember that Ethelred had sent St Sigfrid to Scandinavia. As we have already said, it was St Sigfrid who baptised Irene during his missionary work with Olaf Tryggvason, the befriender of St Vladimir, Irene's father-in-law.

The mother of these two English princes was none other than Irene's half-sister, Ealdgyth, the Swedish-born wife of Edmund Ironside. The two young princes, Edmund and Edward, spent some time at the court in Kiev. Then they were sent on to the royal court of Hungary, perhaps under the protection of Irene's daughter who had married there. East and West still met in Hungary, as is witnessed to by the famous crown of St Stephen. Irene herself reposed later, in 1050, having first become a nun and taken the monastic name of Anne. Venerated as a saint almost at once, in Russia she is known as St Anne of Novgorod and feasted on 10 February, the date of her repose.

The English debt to St Anne is most particular on account of this protection she afforded to the two English princes. Sent to the court of St Stephen (Istvan) of Hungary, it was there that one of them, Edward, known in history as 'the Exile', married Agatha, probably one of St Stephen's daughters. Two of the children of this Anglo-Hungarian marriage interest us in particular. The first is Edgar, called the 'Atheling' who bore the same Christian name as his great-great-grandfather, St Edgar the Peaceful. It was he who would have become King of England after Hastings, had

the English been able to repel the Conqueror, since he was in legitimate line to the throne after his uncle, Edward the Confessor.

As we know, the military might of the Normans was too great and the English were forced to surrender. Edgar fled to Scotland with his family, including his mother Agatha (his father had died in 1057) and a sister, Margaret. There this Margaret married King Malcolm of Scotland and did much to relieve the sufferings of the English and much to improve the situation of the Scottish Church. She had eight children, among them the sons Edgar, named after his uncle, and David, revered as a saint. A daughter, Matilda, married Henry I of England, where she was known as 'Good Queen Maud'. In this way the descent of the English royal house from the pre-Conquest English Kings was ensured. On her repose, Margaret was venerated as a saint and she is known as St Margaret of Scotland. There are thus many interesting parallels between her and St Anne of Novgorod, who had been responsible for St Margaret's father's survival in Kiev. We may perhaps consider St Anne as a spiritual grandmother to St Margaret.

Our story, however, does not end here, nor do the links between England and Russia. After the Norman Invasion and the English defeat, Englishmen and women fled not only to Scotland and Scandinavia but further afield also. Some went in exile to Constantinople, where the ruins of the church they built were still visible in the last century. Gytha, King Harold's daughter, fled to King Swein of Denmark. After his fleet of some 240 ships had failed to liberate England in 1069–1070, she went from there to Russia. There she married Vladimir Monomach, the grandson of Yaroslav the Wise and St Anne, giving English blood to the Russian royal house<sup>lxxxix</sup>. 'Thus Gytha, whose aunt had married Edward the Confessor, married a descendant of St Anne. And it had been St Anne who had protected the nephews of Edward the Confessor, Edward the Exile, and his brother Edmund, in Kiev some forty or more years before. Our story turns full circle.

Such intimate contacts between the royal court of these islands and that of Russia did not occur again until the end of the last century, with the marriage of the future Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II to Alexandra, who had been brought up at the court of Queen Victoria. But then it was not on the same terms; the division was not one simply of language or nation, as it had been over 800 years before, but one that was spiritual, one of Orthodox Christian and Non-Orthodox Christian.

For 800 years after the events we have described above, the Church in England, or for that matter, in Sweden or Hungary or Scotland, was not that of Russia or Constantinople. Gone was the time of St Sigfrid and St Anne, of St Vladimir and St Olaf, of St Edward and St Olga. Rejected was the loving Providence of God that had joined the lives of men and women all over Christendom in the same Holy Spirit of the Body of Christ. The Christian Commonwealth, our common wealth, was lost – except that is in the saints, who from Kent's white shores to Micklegarth, as the Scandinavians called Constantinople, and from the white-walled monasteries of Russia to the stave-churches of Norway were, are and always will be one, within the great family that is the Orthodox Church of Christ.

*Feast of St. Edward the Martyr and 1010th Anniversary of his Martyrdom, 18/31  
March 1988*

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## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>i</sup> Bede, Bk. 2 Chapter 1. See also Dudden, Vol. 1, p. 245.
- <sup>ii</sup> Letter of Pope Leo III to Cenwulf, King of Mercia, dated 8 March 798.
- <sup>iii</sup> Maximianus, Abbot in approximately 590 later became Bishop of Syracuse. By the middle of the eighth century St Andrew's had become an entirely Greek monastery. Today the monastery is known as St Gregory's after its founder.
- <sup>iv</sup> Ferrari casts doubt on this.
- <sup>v</sup> Another translation into Greek was made in about 750 by Pope Zacharias.
- <sup>vi</sup> For a contemporary Orthodox Christian view, see Afanasiev et al, *The Primacy of Peter*, also Archpriest V. Guetté's book on the Papacy.
- <sup>vii</sup> Meyendorff, especially pp. 91–103, explains the background to this development.
- <sup>viii</sup> St Gregory knew Bishop Felix through his correspondence with him, if not actually personally.
- <sup>ix</sup> Bede, Bk. 1, Chapter 23.
- <sup>x</sup> Hodgkin, Vol. 1 p. 97.
- <sup>xi</sup> Glover, *The Place Names of Kent*.
- <sup>xii</sup> Glover suggests that it means 'the stream where hips grow'.
- <sup>xiii</sup> See p. 8, note 1.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Bassenge suggests (p. 52) that he had reposed just before the coming of St Augustine. This is not impossible.
- <sup>xv</sup> Hasted.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Stanley.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Lewis, p. 83.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Deansley, *The Pre-Conquest Church*, p. 49.
- <sup>xix</sup> Brou, who quotes Goscelin. Goscelin's eleventh century *Life of St Augustine* is to be found in Migne P. L., LXXX, pp. 41–95.
- <sup>xx</sup> Deansley, *The Pre-Conquest Church*, p. 49.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Brou.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Mason, who quotes Thorn's *Chronicles of St Augustine's Abbey*.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Mason and Stanley.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Brechter says 601.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Brechter says in Autun.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Stanley. Later interestingly developed by Kelley.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Stanley.

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<sup>xxviii</sup> The Synod of Worcester in 1240 actually forbade parents to enter the church if their children were not confirmed before the age of one year. It was in the thirteenth century that baptism by immersion was replaced by an aspersion of the child's forehead.

<sup>xxix</sup> Brou.

<sup>xxx</sup> Deanesley suggests that Romney Marsh was named after him.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Chronicles also mention Gratosus, Petronius and Nathanael, later Abbots.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Brou, quoting Thomas of Elmham.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Brechter discusses this question and Deanesley answers him.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> See Fernie for a reconstruction of this church, p. 35.

<sup>xxxv</sup> Quoted by Stanley.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Years ranging from 605 to 609 have also been suggested. However the day and the month are certain.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Levison.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Bede, Bk. 2, Chapter 6.

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<sup>xlii</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>xliii</sup> See the words of the Protomartyr of Britain, St Alban (Bede Bk. 1, Chapter 7).

<sup>xliv</sup> Loyn, p. 336–7.

<sup>xlv</sup> Parsons, p. 16.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Campbell.

<sup>xlvii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xlviii</sup> Godfrey, p. 317. Indeed on account of its piety Suffolk was called 'sælig', i.e. 'blessed'. In modern English this has been corrupted to 'silly'.

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<sup>lxxviii</sup> Schramm. It is to be noted that St Dunstan's rite was basically a Byzantine one and in its essentials is that still used in England today. At this time coronation was considered to be a sacrament.

<sup>lxxix</sup> For example the cordiality with which 7,000 pilgrims were received in 1064 by Patriarch Sophronius. Among them were Englishmen.

<sup>lxxx</sup> Janin.

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<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Olaf had been baptized some years before in the Scilly Isles.

<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Life of St Anne of Novgorod, feast-day 10 February.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> For the links between St Vladimir and Olaf see Rydzevskaya in TODRL. Links with the North were so strong that in the eleventh century it is recorded that the Icelandic missionary, Thorwald, was buried in Kiev on a visit there during which he died.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> In ancient Russia both Vladimir Monomach and one of Vladimir's and Gytha's sons, Mstislav, were counted as saints. Gytha's great great grandson was St Alexander Nevsky. Vladimir himself was half-Greek, but in his time many Western saints were venerated in Russia, such as St Adalbert, St Olaf, St Canute of Denmark (who tried to liberate England in 1075 and 1085) and St Magnus, Earl of Orkney. Vladimir's *Instruction* (Pouchenie) was influenced by a similar Old English work of the eighth century, *Fæder Larcwidas*, which Gytha may have brought with her from England. Thus we see also a literary connection between Saxon England and Kievan Russia at this early date. Another of Gytha's sons, Yuri (George) Dolgoruki, founded Moscow. Little did King Harold, the last English king, imagine that his grandson would found the capital of Russia.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Bede, Bk. 2 Chapter 1. See also Dudden, Vol. 1, p. 245.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Letter of Pope Leo III to Cenwulf, King of Mercia, dated 8 March 798.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Maximianus, Abbot in approximately 590 later became Bishop of Syracuse. By the middle of the eighth century St Andrew's had become an entirely Greek monastery. Today the monastery is known as St Gregory's after its founder.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Ferrari casts doubt on this.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> Another translation into Greek was made in about 750 by Pope Zacharias.

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- <sup>lxxxix</sup> For a contemporary Orthodox Christian view, see Afanasiev et al, *The Primacy of Peter*, also Archpriest V. Guetté's book on the Papacy.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Meyendorff, especially pp. 91–103, explains the background to this development.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> St Gregory knew Bishop Felix through his correspondence with him, if not actually personally.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Bede, Bk. 1, Chapter 23.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Hodgkin, Vol. 1 p. 97.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Glover, *The Place Names of Kent*.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Glover suggests that it means 'the stream where hips grow'.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> See p. 8, note 1.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Bassenge suggests (p. 52) that he had reposed just before the coming of St Augustine. This is not impossible.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Hasted.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Stanley.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Lewis, p. 83.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Deansley, *The Pre-Conquest Church*, p. 49.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brou, who quotes Goscelin. Goscelin's eleventh century *Life of St Augustine* is to be found in Migne P. L., LXXX, pp. 41–95.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Deansley, *The Pre-Conquest Church*, p. 49.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brou.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Mason, who quotes Thorn's *Chronicles of St Augustine's Abbey*.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Mason and Stanley.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brechter says 601.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brechter says in Autun.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Stanley. Later interestingly developed by Kelley.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Stanley.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> The Synod of Worcester in 1240 actually forbade parents to enter the church if their children were not confirmed before the age of one year. It was in the thirteenth century that baptism by immersion was replaced by an aspersion of the child's forehead.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brou.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Deanesley suggests that Romney Marsh was named after him.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Chronicles also mention Gratosus, Petronius and Nathanael, later Abbots.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brou, quoting Thomas of Elmham.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Brechter discusses this question and Deanesley answers him.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> See Fernie for a reconstruction of this church, p. 35.

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- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Quoted by Stanley.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Years ranging from 605 to 609 have also been suggested. However the day and the month are certain.
- <sup>lxxxix</sup> Levison.
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- lxxxix Barlow, pp. 218–9 and 293–4.
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- lxxxix Butler, *The Story of a Year*, p. 100.
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