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St. Alban and St. Albans

by WILHELM LEVISON

THE name of St. Alban, the *protomartyr Angliae*, occurs for the first time in the Life of Bishop Germanus of Auxerre which Constantius of Lyons wrote about 480. Germanus and his colleague Lupus of Troyes had been sent to Britain in 429 to fight against the Pelagian heretics; having succeeded, they visited the tomb of St. Alban to offer their thanks for the victory (c. 16, in *Mon. Germ. hist., Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* VII, 262): *Conpressa itaque perversitate damnabili eiusque auctoribus confutatis animisque omnium fidei puritate conpositis, sacerdotes beatum Albanum martyrem, acturi Deo per ipsum gratias, petierunt.* The genuine text of the Life does not tell anything more of the martyr, who evidently could be presumed to be known to the reader. The uneventful return of the bishops to Gaul too is attributed to the intercession of the saint (c. 18, p. 265): *Tranquillam navigationem merita propria et intercessio Albani martyris paraverunt, quietosque antestites suorum desideriis felix carina restituit.*

Bede, in copying several chapters of this source almost verbatim (*Hist. Eccl.*, I, 17-21), added more details on the visit of the tomb (end of c. 18), which were transcribed later in the second, much enlarged Life of St. Germanus. In preparing my edition of the original text, I gave reasons for referring Bede's addition to the 'lost' *Passio Albani*, which no doubt he had used in a preceding chapter (I, 7) on the saint's martyrdom.¹ My conjectures on Bede's source were right. For at that very time Wilhelm Meyer, professor of Göttingen University and one of the founders of modern philology of medieval Latin, had discovered this source and two older texts of the *Passio Albani*. Their publication was a most important contribution to these studies, though it is sometimes overlooked today.²

¹ See my paper 'Bischof Germanus von Auxerre und die Quellen zu seiner Geschichte' (in *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 1903, XXIX, 1, 147-50, 162).

² 'Die Legende des h. Albanus, des Protomartyr Angliae, in Texten vor Beda' (*Abhandlungen der Kgl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philol.-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge*, 1904, VIII, 1). Cp. the reviews by J. B. Bury, *English Historical Review*, 1905, XX, 345-47, and H. Delehaye, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 1905, XXIV, 397-99; Hugh Williams, *Christianity in early Britain* (Oxford 1912), 106-9; H. Delehaye, *Les Passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires* (Brussels 1921), 403-7.

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St. Alban was celebrated during the Middle Ages in the Rhineland, as well as in other parts of the Continent. His name was not the origin of place-names on the Rhine, as in France; but more churches were dedicated to him there than in England. In some cases a local saint of the same name may have been confused with him. The legend of St. Alban at Mainz distinguished the patron-saint from the British martyr. The church stood on the site of an earlier one in a cemetery, where inscriptions recently found have thrown light on the transition from the Roman to the Frankish period. But here also, where the dedication to St. Alban can be traced back to 756—nearly to the death of the Anglo-Saxon St. Boniface—the festival day of the martyr was the 21st of June: this fact suggests the original identity of the local saint with the British martyr, whose day was the 22nd of the same month.³

At Cologne a parish church dedicated to the British saint existed (and exists today near the Gürzenich) as a sign of the old relations between this, the largest town of medieval Germany, and England. The church is first mentioned in the 12th century about the time when Henry II granted the earliest privileges to the merchants of Cologne. Another church of the same town, St. Pantaleon's, owned relics of a St. Albinus, which were said to have been brought from Rome by the empress Theophanu about 984; but these relics also were ascribed to the martyr of St. Albans. So his name is bound to be familiar to a Rhenish historian.

Local history enhanced my interest in the British saint. The development of Bonn was analogous in some respect to that of St. Albans. A Roman town preceded in both instances the medieval cities, which were situated outside the Roman walls—at Bonn a legionary fortress, *Bonna castra*, with its suburb; at St. Albans a *municipium*, Verulamium. Both fell into decay and disappeared. A new town arose gradually in the Middle Ages around a martyr's tomb and church on a hill with an old cemetery, at some distance from the destroyed Roman settlement—at Bonn around the 'minster' of SS. Cassius and Florentius; at Verulamium on the other side of the river Ver near the abbey church of St. Albans. The comparison might be continued. One might mention the part played by the royal 'borough' of Kingsbury

³ So H. Delehaye, 'In Britannia dans le Martyrologe Hiéronymien' (*Proceedings British Academy*, 1931, xvii, 301). The same difference of one day (and the changing of Albanus and Albinus) is found also in the additions of St. Alban's name in several texts of the Martyrologium Hieronymianum (*Acta sanctorum Novembris*, II, 2, pp. 328, 330); many calendars give both days accordingly.

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giving place to the borough of the abbot of St. Albans, and the manor of the archbishop of Cologne growing into the medieval Bonn; the new parish churches being 'proprietary churches' of the two monasteries; the relations between the citizens and the lords of the towns, abbot and archbishop. There were differences in the development of course—but *ne quid nimis!*

However the question is: has the comparison a real foundation at all? Has St. Albans grown up near a martyr's church indeed, near a *martyrium* originating in Roman times, or only wrongly regarded as such in the Middle Ages? No one has doubted the tradition since Bede, who expressly located St. Alban's martyrdom and church *iuxta civitatem Verulamium* (*Hist. Eccl.* 1, 7). The earlier continental sources do not name the place; neither Constantius, nor the poet Venantius Fortunatus in a often quoted verse, nor the authors of the old Passions. Only the earliest British writer, Gildas, who wrote shortly before the middle of the 6th century, gives the name of Verulamium in mentioning the martyrs of Roman times, whose deaths he ascribed by conjecture to the Diocletian persecution (*De excidio Britanniae* c. 10):

Qui (Deus) gratuito munere, supradicto ut conicimus persecutionis tempore, ne penitus crassa atrae noctis caligine Britannia obfuscaretur, clarissimos lampades sanctorum martyrum nobis accendit, quorum nunc corporum sepulturae et passionum loca, si non lugubri divortio barbarorum quam plurima ob scelera nostra civibus adimerentur, non minimum intuentium mentibus ardorem divinae caritatis incuterent: sanctum Albanum Verolamiensem, Aaron et Iulium Legionum urbis cives ceterosque utriusque sexus diversis in locis summa magnanimitate in acie Christi perstantes dico.

Wade-Evans recently held the view⁴ that Alban did not suffer near Verulamium but, like Aaron and Julius, near the Roman legionary fortress of Caerleon in Monmouthshire, on Mount St. Albans, a hill situated northeast of Caerleon on the eastern side of the river Usk, where a Roman cemetery has left its traces: 'the author does not say that Alban suffered at Verulam, or Julius and Aaron at Caerleon, only that Alban was a man of Verulam, and that the other two were of Caerleon'. But why should Gildas have mentioned the towns, if the *corporum sepulturae et passionum loca* of the martyrs were not to be found there, to use his own words? Wade-Evans agrees that the martyrdom of Julius and Aaron is connected with Caerleon indeed, and draws the conclusion: 'We should naturally expect to find the "martyrium

⁴ A. W. Wade-Evans, 'The Site of St. Alban's Martyrdom', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1905, 6th series v, 256-59; *Welsh Christian Origins* (Oxford 1934), 18 f.; *Nennius's History of the Britons* (London 1938), 131 (n. 2), 132 (n. 1).

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Albani" in the same district'. On the contrary, if the two others suffered near Caerleon, one must expect from Gildas' words the same in the case of Albanus and Verulamium. I shall not dwell on all the arguments of Wade-Evans. He bases his reasoning upon Gildas alone, instead of upon the old Passions, on one of which Gildas depended in repeating, from memory I think, a part of its contents. The name of the river, the waters of which Alban crosses before his death, is not given in the Passions; Gildas wrongly calls it the Thames (c. 11). This instance proves that he cannot have seen Verulamium and its river Ver, the small brook which separates the Roman town from St. Albans; nor could he have inserted the name of the Thames, if he had known Caerleon and the river Usk and believed that Alban also suffered there. Nor does Gildas speak of a military centre, a fortress like Caerleon, as the place of the martyrdom.

There was a chapel dedicated to the martyr on Mount St. Albans, as the names of the hill and of a piece of land 'called the chapel yard' suggest even today; the church is mentioned in 1495 (Jos. A. Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire* (1932), iv, ii, 305), but it might have been of comparatively late origin, from a time when the fame of the martyr had spread and had reached Monmouthshire. This can be seen from documents which mention the church of SS. Julius and Aaron, the other British martyrs of Roman age who are known from Gildas. That a church in or near Caerleon was dedicated to their memory might be presumed from his words, but it is attested the first time by a charter in the Book of Llandaff.⁵ It has the heading *De Merthir (=martyrio) Iún (read Iulii) et Aron* and tells the end of a struggle between three sons of Beli and the men of Bishop Nud of Llandaff. The object of the contest was *totum territorium sanctorum martirum Iulii et Aron*, which was given back by the adversaries to the church of Llandaff. A description of the boundaries of this 'territory' in Welsh is added; here it is sufficient to state that they began and ended on the river Usk, in accordance with Gildas' mention of Caerleon. The charter can be dated about 870; the first of the lay witnesses are Mouric, king of Gwent, who died in 873, and his sons Brochvail and Fernvail, who some

⁵ *The Text of the Book of Llan Dáv* ed. J. Gw. Evans and J. Rhys (Oxford 1893), 225 f. (translation of the Welsh part p. 377; cp. Bradney, loc. cit. 294, 302). A few churches in Brittany were dedicated to St. Aaron, rather the martyr of Caerleon than an obscure hermit of St. Malo, in the opinion of J. Loth, *Les noms des saints bretons* (Paris 1910), 7 (cp. 147) and of F. Duine, 'Mémento des sources hagiographiques de l'histoire de Bretagne 1, (*Mémoires de la Société archéologique d'Ille-et-Vilaine*, 1918, XLVI, 380 f., off-print 138 f.)

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years later recognized the supremacy of Alfred the Great together with king Hywel ap Rhys of Glywysing, who witnessed several other charters of the same bishop Nud. A territory belonging to two saints must have been connected with one church dedicated to both.

More than two centuries pass before the church is mentioned again. The advowson, we might say the proprietary rights of it, had come to the Welsh lords of Caerleon, who were succeeded after the Norman Conquest by Robert of Chandos. In or shortly before 1113 he gave the church of Goldcliff to the famous monastery of Le Bec in Normandy for the foundation of a priory; the church was situated on the coast eastwards from the mouth of the Usk. He bestowed on it other property, as well as churches in his 'defence' of which he held the advowson; he mentions first *ecclesiam sanctae Trinitatis iuxta Karliun* and *ecclesiam Iulii et Aron*.⁶ The church of the Holy Trinity is now the church of the hamlet of Christchurch, on the eastern side of the Usk between Newport and Caerleon-ultra-pontem; it 'stands on an eminence and is a prominent landmark for miles'.⁷ Down the river, west of Christchurch, is the farmhouse of St. Julian's, once the residence of a branch of the Herbert family and, by his first wife, of Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury, the philosopher. The place has been identified with our St. Julius, whose name was changed to Julianus in the Welsh genealogies of the tenth century in Harleian ms. 3859,⁸ though there existed English churches dedicated to saints of the real name of Julianus. Perhaps archaeologists may be able to find evidence of a church dating at least from the ninth century. Both churches, St. Trinity and SS. Julius and Aaron, are mentioned in the same way in two confirmations of the endowment of Goldcliff priory; one of c. 1154-58 by Morgan ap Owen (died 1158) who had brought back the lordship of Caerleon into Welsh hands, and by his brother Iorwerd; the other of 1204 by archbishop Hubert Walter of Canterbury.

In the meantime a third patron—St. Alban—had been associated with Julius and Aaron. In December 1142 young Henry Plantagenet was brought for the first time to England to give strength by his presence to the claims of his adherents against king Stephen; he came soon

⁶ *Monasticon Anglicanum*, 1830, vi, 2, 1022. The charter is known from an inspeximus and confirmation of Edward I of 1290; see Calendar Charter Rolls, II, 358, no. 1. The year 1113 is mentioned in the confirmation of Henry I preserved by another inspeximus of 1290, ib. 361, no. 1. The first roll is repeated in an inspeximus of Edward II of 1320, ib. III, 434 f.

⁷ *Journal British Archaeological Association*, N.S. xxxv, 15; cp. Bradney IV, ii, 309 ff.

⁸ E. Faral, *La Légende arthurienne* (Paris 1929), III, 54.

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afterwards to Bristol—not far away from Goldcliff—to be educated there, and returned thence in 1146 to France. The monks of Goldcliff thought it opportune to have a confirmation of their property issued in the name of the son of the ‘ empress ’ ; so ‘ Henricus dux Normannorum et comes Andegavorum ’, as the young pretender of ten years of age was styled here in anticipation, confirmed at Bristol in 1143 the donations of Robert of Chandos and of the other benefactors of Goldcliff.⁹ St. Trinity is mentioned as usual, but the other church gets the name : *ecclesiam sanctorum Iulii et Aaron atque Albani*. This triplet occurs again in 1201 in a confirmation by king John. The patronage of St. Alban apparently is accessory : it is missing in the earliest charters which mention the church, nor is it always added afterwards.

Julius and Aaron, of whom nothing was known but their martyrdom in Roman times, were mentioned by Gildas, Bede and others only in connexion with Alban, whose fame was increasing in the 12th century through his monastery. The monks of Goldcliff might have wanted to add relics of the more famous *protomartyr Angliae* to the bones of the two old patrons of the church, who alone connected their priory with ancient Christian times. We do not know when and where, between 1113 and 1143, they got the relics, which no doubt gave substance to the patron’s name. Relics reputed to be those of St. Alban were found in many places in the 12th century, and caused controversies between St. Albans and Ely which lasted for centuries. There might have been many opportunities of acquiring relics of the martyr ; but we may guess with some reason at some special occasion.

⁹ Charter Rolls, II, 362, no. 2 ; L. Delisle and E. Berger, ‘ Recueil des actes de Henri II roi d’Angleterre et duc de Normandie ’ (in *Chartes et diplômes relatifs à l’histoire de France*) (1916), I, 53, no. 48*. The title given to Henry II corresponds to the use of 1151–53 only ; therefore Delisle, *Introduction*, 130 and 511 (no. 46*) and Berger, loc. cit. I, 53 attributed the charter to 1153 (Delisle 511 to 1153–54). Berger recognized that one of the witnesses, Count Robert of Gloucester, died in 1147, and conjectured *Roberto* might be a blunder of the transcriber of the charter for *Willelmo*, Robert’s son and successor (pp. 53, 55). But another witness, the famous Count Miles of Hereford, died before, on 24 December 1143, to be succeeded by his son Roger ; the charter has to be dated from this very year. When Henry was brought to England the first time, the use could not yet have been fixed enough to call him only ‘ ducis Normannorum et comitis Andegavorum filius ’ ; the mention also of the Welshmen and of Wales, besides French- and Englishmen, Normandy and England, in the ‘ inscription ’ of the charter is unusual (Delisle, *Introd.* 209, n. 1 ; but see I, 182, no. 78). Another possibility is that Henry’s title was deformed by the transcriber of the charter. Delisle, *Introd.* 130 rightly had no doubt as to ‘ l’authenticité et la sincérité ’ of the document, which seems to be the first known charter issued in the name of Henry II.

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Goldcliff's connexion with Le Bec persisted in spite of all geographical and political difficulties till the 15th century, when the priory was given first to Tewkesbury and finally to Eton.¹⁰ St. Albans also had relations with the Norman house. Abbot Paul (1077-93), was a kinsman of archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury, whose stay at Le Bec is well known; St. Albans had been committed to his care. The memory of the connexion was so strong that, according to the strange story of Matthew Paris, in his *Life of Offa II*, most of the first monks of the latter's foundation came *ex domo Becci*—nearly 250 years before Le Bec existed! Abbot Paul had begun the erection of a new church at St. Albans, which was consecrated in the presence of Henry I in 1115 (28 December). Abbot Geoffrey (1119-46) added a more precious shrine of the martyr; the old one was opened and the body transferred on the 1st day of August, 1129. So, in the interval between 1113 and 1143, this translation might have given the chance of parting with smaller relics of the saint, and might explain the appearance of his name with Julius and Aaron near the Usk. Anyhow, whenever the church got relics of the protomartyr, a chapel which gave the name to Mount St. Albans owed its patron-saint, as we may presume without scruple, to the old church, in the same way as a chapel of St. Aaron, which is said to have existed at Penrhôs north of Caerleon, no doubt derived its dedication from the same source.

I abstain from dwelling on the fictions of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who copied Gildas' words on the three martyrs, but doubled the common church of the two citizens of Caerleon, attributing to the town a church of St. Julius with a convent of nuns, and a church of St. Aaron with a chapter of canons. In ascribing to this church the third metropolitan see of Great Britain, he was opposing the aspirations of St. Davids. The influence of his historical romance was immense; his statements on the two churches also were repeated by Giraldus Cambrensis and others. But the real church of the two martyrs disappeared completely.¹¹ Archaeologists have lately revived the Roman

¹⁰ Rose Graham, 'Four Alien Priors in Monmouthshire', *British Arch. Assoc.*, N.S. xxxv, 104 f., 108 f., 112 f., 115 ff., 118 f.; cp. Bradney, loc. cit. IV, 2, 272 ff.

¹¹ Even the day of the two martyrs was forgotten. In later times their names were ascribed to the first of July: one of them had the name of the month, the other that of the high-priest Aaron, whose death was believed to have occurred on this day (cp. *Acta sanctorum Julii* I, 9 ff., 17, *Novembris* II, 2, p. 345; Baring-Gould and Fisher, *The Lives of the British Saints*, I, 103). In Brittany Aaron's festival day was 22 June, the day of St. Alban; see Duine, loc. cit.

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fortress of Caerleon : let us hope that a chance may occur to unearth the 'merthir' nearby which nothing but the spade could bring to light. But it would be lost labour to search there for the *martyrium* of St. Alban too. It can be ascribed without hesitation to Verulamium and St. Albans, as far as certainty or probability is at all applicable to such traditions.

We can trace the cult of St. Alban back to the first part of the fifth century, when St. Germanus visited his tomb in 429. How many generations of Christians had already paid their devotion to his memory ? The authority of Bede established the 'tradition' that he, like Aaron and Julius, suffered in the Diocletian persecution. He depended on Gildas for this belief, but overlooked the fact that the British author had attributed these martyrdoms to the last and greatest persecution only by conjecture (c. 10, above p. 339) : 'supradicto *ut conicimus* persecutionis tempore' are Gildas' words, as Mommsen's critical edition has placed beyond dispute, instead of the evident miscorrection of a single manuscript *ut cognoscimus*. This dating was in contradiction to the express statement not only of Eusebius but also of Lactantius, and of some Donatists in a letter of 313 that in the part of the Roman Empire governed by Constantius Chlorus, Christians had not to pay for their faith with their lives, but, according to Lactantius, only churches were destroyed ; no martyrdom in the countries under his authority is ascribed to his time by any reliable witness. The contradiction disappeared by the emendation of Gildas' text ; the more since the publication of W. Meyer mentioned above showed that the *Passio Albani* used by Gildas and Bede gave no date for the persecution, so that Bede did indeed rely on Gildas' mere conjecture. As this fact is sometimes forgotten it may be worth while to insist on the meaning of the texts brought to light by Meyer.

His third *Passio* has so far only been found in a Paris ms. (no. 11748), which came from Saint-Maur-les-Fossés and was written in France in the tenth century or a little earlier ; it is the text used by Bede and perhaps by Gildas too (I shall call it, with Meyer, 'P'). His first *Passio* is preserved in a Turin ms. (D.V.3), also of French origin ; it was written at the end of the eighth century in the so-called *ab*-type of the script of Corbie (=T). Besides these two recensions of the *Passio* which survived each in a single French collection of Lives of Saints, there exists a small third text which is transmitted in an English ms. of the 12th century also (London, Gray's Inn, no. 3), but no doubt

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was derived like other texts of the Codex from a continental copy; for the continental tradition of this piece is larger and much older (Autun, *Séminaire* 34, 9–10th century; British Museum, Addit. ms. 11880, 9th century; Einsiedeln 248, 12th century). This short Passion (E) is an epitome of T—the first part being very abbreviated—which was expanded again into P, as Meyer has shown; it is the connecting link between both, as is manifest by words of earlier texts which were copied by the author of T, and of which some were repeated in E and fewer, by way of E, passed into P.

For T, especially its first part, is to some degree a cento composed of phrases of earlier sources, which Meyer has brought to light in his notes; his proofs can be enlarged from the same and other texts. This procedure, which is not unusual in hagiographical writings, might be made even more evident in a future edition by printing the borrowed words in different types. The short preface is taken from the *Passio Xysti, Felicissimi ac Agapiti* of Roman origin, in its separate form (BHL. 7809, 7811 f.)¹² There are phrases which are common to T and the *Passio Eleutherii* of Rome (ib. 2451, cp. 2450), as Meyer has seen; but a part of them and others are also found in the *Passio Quintini*, the martyr of Saint-Quentin (ib. 6999)—I will only mention the admonition of the prefect c. 11: ‘*consenti mihi et sacrificia magnis diis Iovi et Apollini*’, cp. T c. 8 (Meyer, p. 50): ‘*immola et sacrificia diis nostris sacratissimis, Iovi et Apollini sacrificia offer*’.

Meyer compared also phrases recurring in the *Passio Symphoriani* of Autun of the fifth century (ib. 7967 ff), which became known to Celtic scholars by the discovery of old Gaulish words in the manuscript tradition of the text studied by Meyer; but here another text might be the real source. In an introductory chapter of T (c. 2) the persecution of the Christians in Gaul is mentioned, especially in *urbi Lugdunensium et Agennensium*. Meyer doubted the last name and thought of the more famous Vienne, and its Christian community which occurs with that of Lyons in the time of persecution. But the substitution of *Agennensium* for *Viennensium* is improbable from the palaeographical aspect as well as from the historical view. Why should a copyist have substituted the less known Agen for Vienne? The author, I suggest, rather had an interest in Agen, because one of his hagiographical sources

¹² I refer as to lives of saints to the numbers of the excellent *B(ibliotheca) H(agiographica) L(atina)* of the Bollandists, Brussels, 1898–1901, with *Supplementi editio altera*, 1911, and do not mention editions themselves.

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referred to this town of southwestern Gaul. There are two celebrated martyrs of Agen—Fides and Caprasius; their Passions originally were separate but later were united. Now the first *Passio Caprasii* (BHL. 1558) is mainly a plagiarism borrowed from the *Passio Symphoriani* mentioned above. The Caprasius-texts accessible to me do not contain two of the three Symphorianus-sentences discovered by Meyer (p. 81); but no critical edition exists of any of these Passions, and some parallels with τ can be found even in the combined Passion of Fides and Caprasius (ib. 2929 ff). So the suggestion may be permitted that an older recension of this Passion, not yet accounted for, was the medium between the texts on Symphorian and Alban.

However, Quintinus, Symphorianus, and Caprasius are martyrs of Gaul, and to the same country belongs the last and most important source detected by Meyer, the *Passio Irenaei* (BHL. 4457 b, c, which is introductory only), *Andochii*, *Thyrsi*, *Felicis* (424), *Benigni* (1153), the martyrs of Lyons, Saulieu and Dijon. It was composed as one piece of work and as such is preserved in a Farfa MS. of about 900; but the parts relating to martyrs of single places afterwards were copied separately, when 'Passionalia' were arranged after the sequence of the calendar (Meyer 62 ff). This complex was composed in Burgundy in the time of Bishop Gregory of Langres (506-7 to 539-40), and its influence was large, though the historical value of these legends is very small. The author of τ used all parts of this source. The festal days of Alban (22 June) and Irenaeus (28 June) were separated by a short interval; so the reading of a Passion of the latter might have been obvious to a man writing for the glory of Alban. He had read not only legends—some phrases may be referred to the influence of Statius (Meyer 56, 26 'floribus picturatus'; cp. *Theb.* vi, 58), Vegetius (54, 22 'divinitatis instinctu'; cp. *Epit. rei milit.* II, 21),¹³ Hieronymus (48, 30 'antiquitas tradidit'; cp. *Epist.* 18, 6, 7, ed. Hilberg I, p. 82) and Rufinus (48, 4 'in ultimis partibus mundi'; cp. *Hist. Eccl.* IV, 7, 14, ed. Mommsen, p. 313).

His little work has no place in the rank of *Acta martyrum sincera*; it is a legendary tale, of which the essential contents (*via P*) are known to many readers from Bede. The trial, the debate between Alban and the judge, the river making way for the saint rushing to martyrdom, the well springing from the soil to supply him with water, the executioner

¹³ The famous inscription of Constantine's triumphal arch ('instinctu divinitatis') can be left aside.

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converted by his example and suffering as his 'colleague', and the other executioner, whose eyes fell to the ground together with the martyr's head: these are frequent elements of such *légendes épiques*, though the author remarkably abstained from the favourite theme of enlarging St. Alban's tortures. From the end of the martyr he passes at once to the visit of Germanus at his tomb, where the bishop deposited relics of all apostles and several martyrs,¹⁴ taking with him some dust from the place where Alban had suffered—*reliques représentatifs*, such as were used in the West in early times, when it was considered that the repose of the saint's body should not be disturbed. These details suggest, as Meyer has seen, that T was composed at Auxerre; a church of St. Alban existed there in the 9th century, which, according to tradition, had been erected by Germanus himself,¹⁵ and this tradition may be right in respect of the twofold mention of Alban in Constantius' Life of Germanus (above p. 337).

The description of the place of martyrdom outside the walls of the Roman town (T c. 16) is so accurate, that it seems to go back to early tradition.¹⁶ Only the rapidity of the river (c. 14) does not correspond with reality, and is a legendary exaggeration originating in the story of the *torrens* which made way for the martyr, while the bridge was crowded by people accompanying him on his last walk. There is a bridged ford near St. Michael's church in the 'marshy valley' of the Ver, which 'carried the road from Verulamium to Colchester in Roman times', today also leading from the ruins of the *forum*, and of a gate of Verulamium to the church of St. Alban on the other side of the river; this fact explains the origin of the legend. The presence of a well near the church no doubt resulted in the incorporation of the legend of the well (c. 17); the name of Holywell Street (today Holywell Hill) keeps its memory alive.

Text T is copied from a Merovingian ms. with the irregular orthography and grammar of the times and, consequently, is full of blunders; the editor had to correct many misreadings, leaving the emendation of

¹⁴ Constantius mentions that Germanus always had with him a *capsula* with relics of saints, *Vita Germani*, c. 4, 15, 43 (pp. 253, 262, 281).

¹⁵ Heiric, *Vita Germani* IV, 28 ff. (ed. Traube, *Mon. Germ. hist., Poetae Lat.* III, 476) and *Miracula Germani* I, 17 (*Acta sanctorum Julii* VII, 258); *Gesta pontificum Autissiodorensium* c. 7 (ed. L. M. Duru, *Bibliothèque historique de l'Yonne* I (Auxerre-Paris 1850), 318).

¹⁶ *Victoria Hist. Hertfordshire* (1914), IV, 285 f.; R. E. M. and T. V. Wheeler, *Verulamium*, 1936 (*Reports of the Research Committee of the Soc. of Antiq.*, no. XI), 32 f.

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others to a successor.¹⁷ But the little work had not even got the finishing touch. T seems to be derived from a first draft, to which some details had not yet been added, when E was excerpted (perhaps by the author himself thinking of another account?). Alban's conversion by the example of the cleric to whom he gave shelter in the persecution, is to be guessed only in T (c. 4); the execution of Alban himself is to be read between the lines but not told (c. 18). P added some words on the conversion; Bede with his sense of symmetry, using P filled the other gap also by a short sentence.

But we can see the legend in the very making even more. There are in T a few sentences which are out of place where they are transmitted, obviously marginal notes which were admitted into the text by a transcriber in wrong places (Meyer 32 f); there are no vestiges of these notes in E or P. Alban is said to have appeared to Germanus on the sea, when the bishop was sailing to Britain, *referente sancto Germano* (c. 21, p. 60), and when he was sleeping after the matins in the *basilica* of St. Alban, the martyr again appeared and revealed the circumstances of his sufferings (ib.): *dum se sopori dedisset, sanctus Albanus adfuit et que acta fuerant de persecutionibus eius, revelata tradidit utque titulis scripta retenerentur publice declaravit*. Miracles also worked in the presence of Germanus and effecting the conversion of pagans are a new addition (c. 22). These insertions possibly might be notes made by the author himself for an expansion of his work, or they might be additions of an early reader who had a similar intention. In any case, they confirm Auxerre as the home of the author.

One of his sources, the Irenaeus-cycle, was composed some years after 506 (Meyer 64); but he wrote before the middle of the sixth century. For not only Bede used in 731 P (derived from T through E), but one of the texts had already been read by Gildas who wrote shortly before 547 and, relating Alban's end freely and probably from memory,¹⁸ he exaggerated the miracle of the river making way for the martyr. He wrongly added the name of the Thames (above p. 340), and instead of

¹⁷ I suggest c. 2 (Meyer p. 46, 16) 'ecclesiam christianam [nu]per fundatam' for 'eccl. christiano per fundata'; c. 15 (p. 56, 9) 'horae spatio orationem posuit' for 'oraspatii oratione posuit', see e.g. Rufinus, *Hist. Eccl.*, IV, 15, 14 (ed. Mommsen p. 341) on Polycarp: 'unius horae ab eis spatio orationis gratia inpetrato', or *Passio Bonifatii Tarsensis* c. 9 (BHL. 1413): 'Transacto autem quasi unius horae spatio', etc.

¹⁸ I cannot agree with J. B. Bury, loc. cit. 346, who considered the possibility that Gildas had no written source but simply gave the legend, as it was orally current at Verulamium. But would he have spoken of the Thames in this case? Probably he had read the text, but it was not before him when he was writing.

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the people crowding the bridge and blocking the road, he told of a thousand men following the saint through the river like the Jews marching through the Jordan. The first *Passio Albani* therefore can be dated about 515-40.

We do not know which recension Gildas had read. It gave no date of the persecution in which Alban suffered (above p. 344). That is the case with E and P, which begin 'Tempore persecutionis sanctus Albanus . . .' and call the persecuting magistrate simply *iudex* (P twice *princeps* also). On the other hand, T ascribes the martyrdom to the emperor (Septimius) Severus, whose persecution in Gaul he knew from the *Passio Irenaei* (c. 6, Meyer p. 75), of which he borrowed so much; accordingly in T not *iudex*, but *Caesar* persecutes Alban, debates with him and gives the sentence of death. But a text of T seems to have existed before, where the author, in spite of all other borrowings from the Irenaeus-cycle, had not yet admitted the name of the emperor Severus. It is not very probable that this name should have been dropped in the epitome for the uncertain 'Tempore persecutionis', if it was to be found in the source, and that *iudex* was substituted for *Caesar*. There are traces of an earlier form without the name too; for in T also (c. 14, p. 54) is one mention of the 'judge': *Denique iudex sine obsequio* (that is, without his officials) *in civitate substiterat*, and after the conversion and martyrdom of the first executioner we are told (c. 20, p. 58): *Tunc impiissimus Caesar* (EP: *iudex*) *exanimis, tanta novitate percussus, iniussu etiam principum iubet de persecutione cessare, referens gaudere potius religionem caede sanctorum, per quam eandem opinabantur aboleri*—the emperor acting without an order of the *principes*, and making an official *relatio* to them? That presupposes a text, where a magistrate, *iudex*, was actor in the drama, not the emperor himself. Meyer (p. 21) sought the explanation of *iniussu principum* from the age of the author, in whose time the sons of Clovis had divided the governance of the Frankish kingdom; the emperor should, in the opinion of the writer, have asked his colleagues first. But this interpretation is unsuitable. The Merovingian kings, though representing in theory the same *regnum Francorum*, were independent of each other. There is no explanation but in the view that the present text is a concoction:¹⁹ it was not an emperor who acted originally, but a *iudex*, the name of Severus and the title of Caesar being introduced afterwards by the author from a source from which he had drawn before;

¹⁹ So also *Vict. Hist. Hertfordshire*, IV, 283, n. 13.

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but in correcting he overlooked a few passages which conflicted with his new procedure. That a persecution occurred in the time of (Septimius) Severus, he might have known not only from the unreliable *Passio Irenaei*, but also from Rufinus's translation of Eusebius; that the emperor in his last years came to Britain himself and died there at York (211)—he could read e.g. in the familiar Breviary of Eutropius or in the Histories of Orosius. Anyhow, we cannot trust his statement of the time of the martyrdom which was originally absent from his text, and have to acquiesce in our ignorance of the age of the British martyrs. In all probability they did not suffer in the Diocletian persecution; the 'tradition' created by a guess of Gildas and accepted by Bede, is built on sand. It is possible, as has been conjectured, that they gave their lives for Christ in the persecution of Decius or Valerianus about the middle of the third century. *Ignoramus* and *ignorabimus*: it is very improbable that even the archaeologists will be fortunate enough to contribute to a solution of this problem of early British church-history.

The tradition of Auxerre described the tomb and church of St. Alban as existing in 429; Gildas hinted at Verulamium as connected with the martyr's memory. Bede was not relying on Gildas alone in speaking more expressly of the same place as the site of Alban's martyrdom, and of the church of 'wonderful work' which was erected there in honour of the martyr, when peace had been restored to Christianity; it existed in the time of Bede (731), who related the cure of the sick, and frequent miracles operated there *usque ad hanc diem* (*Hist. Eccl.* 1, 7). The end of the eighth century brought a new phase in the history of the place. Though we have to rely on late sources only, the tradition may be right, that Offa of Mercia erected a new church, added a monastery of Benedictine monks and made an 'elevation' of the sacred bones which were put into a shrine in 793. The history of the foundation is obscured 'not so much by lack of information as by the difficulty of the task of disentangling fact from fiction'.²⁰ The legend of the foundation was written down in the early 13th century,^{20A} but some

²⁰ L. F. Rushbrook Williams, *History of the Abbey of St. Albans* (1917), p. 3.

^{20A} Roger of Wendover, *Chronica* (586, 793) ed. Coxe, I, 91 and 251-59; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* ed. Luard, I, 252, 356-61; Paris' *Vita Offae secundi* ed. Wats, *Matthaei Paris Historia Major* (London 1684), 982 ff. (on its relation to the Chronicles cp. L. Theopold, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Quellen zur angelsächsischen Geschichte*

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features can be traced a century back. According to the tradition of St. Albans the old church had been destroyed by the pagan Saxons, and the site of the martyr's tomb was forgotten, until it was miraculously revealed to Offa and the *inventio* of the relics in accordance with the revelation was performed on 1 August 793. This legend of the forgotten tomb and the miraculous invention is in open conflict with Bede's statement, nor can the opinion be held that the knowledge of the tomb was lost, between 731 and 793, in an age when all England was Christian, superficially at least, and the cult of saints was a predominant feature of religion.

Not an invention, but a translation, had to be made of course, when the body of the martyr was removed the first time from the earth and put in a shrine. Cotton MS. Domitian A. VIII of the Saxon Chronicle of about 1100 (F) has as the annal for 793: '*Translatio sancti Albani*';²¹ an entry made in the later 12th century at Canterbury into Winchester Annals (Cotton MS. Nero A. VIII) changed the first word: '*Inventio sancti Albani martyris*'.²² Two treatises of the 13th century on St. Alban's invention distinguish between the day of the invention by Offa, 1 August, and the day of the translation of the relics into the new church after some years, 13 August (*Illustr.* pl. 32, 42); this might have been the real day of the earliest translation. The first of August occurs in an agreement of about 1050, when an annual payment was fixed to be made to the monks of St. Albans *ad festivitatem sancti Petri ad*

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des 8. Jahrhunderts, Diss. of Göttingen 1872, 112 ff.); *Chronica Johannis Wallingford* ed. Gale, *Historiae Britannicae*, etc. *Scriptores* xv, 1691, 530; the double *Inventio S. Albani* (BHL. 215-6; Hardy, *Descriptive Catalogue* I, 1, p. 16, no. 28-29) in Dublin MS. Trinity College E. I. 40 (cp. P. Grosjean, *Anal. Bolland.*, 1928, XLVI, 96 f.), fol. 50 v-62 v, 66 v-68 v, of which, besides fragments published by Ussher (Usserius), larger parts are accessible by the reproductions of W. R. L. Lowe and E. F. Jacob (with a preface by M. R. James), *Illustrations to the Life of St. Alban* (Oxford, 1924), with the drawings referred to Matthew Paris (quoted *Illustr.*); some forged charters. On the problems of the historiography of St. Albans I will only mention Claude Jenkins, *The Monastic Chronicler and the Early School of St. Albans* (1922); F. M. Powicke, 'Notes on the Compilation of the *Chronica Majora* of Matthew Paris' (*Modern Philology*, 1941, XXXVIII, 305-17), and—for the later Middle Ages—V. H. Galbraith, *St. Albans Chronicle* 1406-20 (Oxford 1937), pp. xxvii ff.

²¹ Petrie, *Monumenta historica Britannica* I, 1848, 338, n. 24; cp. Ch. Plummer, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles parallel* I, p. 56, n. 1; II, p. 62 and II.

²² F. Liebermann, *Ungedruckte Anglo-Normannische Geschichtsquellen* (Strassburg 1879), 63.

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Vincula ;²³ a festivity of the martyr is not mentioned on that occasion. On 1 August Peter's pence had to be paid every year,²⁴ which was claimed by the abbey itself from the monastic lands ; its introduction, in which Offa seems to have had a share indeed, was connected in the legend with St. Alban's invention. The idea of this festivity might have been promoted by the neighbourhood of the *Inventio Stephani protomartyris* on 3 August.²⁵ The festivity is mentioned first about the year 1115, when the new church was consecrated (above p. 343) : Bishop Robert of Lincoln (1094-1123) in the time of abbot Richard (1097-1119) granted an indulgence to all penitents coming *ad praedictam festivitatem* to St. Albans (*Gesta abbatum S. Albani* ed. Riley, I, 92). Abbot Geoffrey (1119-46) seems to have been a special promoter of the legend. Its first elements are to be found in the works of William of Malmesbury in the time of this abbot, who gave to the monastery a vestment with embroidery representing the invention (*Gesta abb.*, I, 94). When in 1129 he transferred the relics of St. Alban from the old shrine into a more precious one, he chose as the day of translation the occasion of the 'Invention'-festivity, but shifted its future celebration to the next day, the 2nd of August, because the 1st was occupied too much by the feast of St. Peter in Fetters. Therefore the *Inventio* is marked on the 2nd in the St. Albans calendars, the oldest of which are written in the time of abbot Geoffrey.²⁶ That the 1st of August, not the 2nd, had been the festal day till 1129, is confirmed by the fact that the same calendars which note the Invention on the 2nd, mark the octave of the martyr on the 8th, not on the 9th, of August, and a late one, besides the Invention of the 2nd, adds 'De sancto Albano' on the 1st, in accordance with the legend of the invention by Offa.

In any case, there are sufficient reasons to doubt the story of the destroyed church, the forgotten tomb and its revelation in 793 : it can be neglected by the historian as well as by the archaeologist. The foundation of the monastery, in accordance with the tradition, may have effected the erection of a new church and the 'elevation' of the

²³ Charter referring to abbot Leofstan and Tova, widow of Wihtric, ed. Kemble, *Codex diplom. aevi Saxon.*, IV, 284, no. 950 ; Luard, loc. cit. VI, 29, no. 12.

²⁴ F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* II, 2, p. 610, § 15 (cp. II, 1, p. 173).

²⁵ Stephen is compared to St. Alban in Dublin ms. fol. 61 f., *Illustr.*, pl. 50 f.

²⁶ Ad. Goldschmidt, *Der Albanipsalter in Hildesheim* (Berlin, 1895), 28 ; Fr. Wormald, 'English Benedictine Kalendars after A.D. 1100, I, 41 (*Henry Bradshaw Society*, LXXVII, 1939) ; J. Dalton, *Ordinale Exon.*, II, 421 (ib. XXXVIII, 1909) ; *Annales Henrici IV*, 1406 (in *Johannis de Trokelowe Annales*, ed. Riley, 420).

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relics and their 'translation' into a shrine; but there seems to have been, here at least, no gap between Roman and Saxon times, and though the direct legacy from the Roman province to England may be 'negligible',²⁷ the cult of St. Alban was one of the survivals.

The legend of the martyr himself so far was the same which Bede had told following the third *Passio*. There are other texts which are copied more or less verbatim from Bede (BHL. 206-10, etc.). The author of the Old English Martyrology (c. 850), as well as Aelfric for his homily on the saint, had no other source. The *historia*, which abbot Aelfric (bishop of Ramsbury from 990, archbishop of Canterbury 995-1005) is said to have composed for liturgical singing, and the tapestry, on which the suffering of St. Alban could be seen, given to the abbey by abbot Richard (1097-1119), no doubt depended likewise on Bede.

But a few years only had passed since the translation of 1129, when a new epoch in the history of the legend was initiated. The author of the first Passion had told that Alban, though pagan, had given shelter to a cleric fleeing from the persecution, and had presented himself to the persecutors, putting on the great-coat (*caracalla*) of his guest, of whom no further mention is made. We are not informed whether he escaped death by Alban's sacrifice, or if he too became a victim of the persecution. Nor did E, P, Gildas or Bede give an explanation; Gildas expressly speaks of mutual changing of clothes (*vestibus*), and P and Bede tell in a few words how the example of the *clericus* caused Alban's conversion to the Christian faith. Geoffrey of Monmouth copied the words of Gildas; but adding *suum* he changed the confessor of the faith into the confessor of Alban (corresponding to Bede's *magistro suo*). He added more: he gave him a name, Amphibalus, which was absolutely unknown until then. It is controversial whether he was induced by a wrong variant reading in Gildas, or by a misunderstood gloss to Bede's *ipsius habitu, id est caracalla*. One may doubt whether *amphibalum* (originally *amphimallum*) was a more usual word than *caracalla*, and was appropriate for explaining it; Geoffrey in reading of *vestibus* or *caracalla* of the confessor might have got the idea of the name immediately. He invented not only the name—the work of this romancer is full of inventions—he 'canonized' too Alban's protégé, attributing to Winchester a church of St. Amphibalus, where prince

²⁷ R. Lennard, 'From Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England' (in *Wirtschaft und Kultur. Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Alfons Dopsch* (Baden near Vienna 1938), 72 f.

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Constans was to become a monk and a son of Modred was murdered before the altar by king Constantine, according to this historical novel. So a new saint came to light in 1136-38.

The invention had consequences at St. Albans itself after some time. Abbot Simon (1167-83) added to the shrine of 1129 a precious exterior feretory, where the life and death of St. Alban were represented in gold and silver (*Gesta abb.* I, 189). The abbey had incurred heavy debts (ib. 183, 193); anyone who knows the medieval misuse of pious belief and offering, will not be surprised to learn that just at this time the generosity of the devotees was stimulated by the discovery of the history and, what was more, of the relics of St. Amphibalus. 'The possession of an attractive collection of relics and wonder-working images was as economically important to a monastery as is a good display of ruins to a modern tourist resort'.²⁸

At first a monk, William, composed a new extensive Passion of St. Alban (and Amphibalus!) by command of abbot Simon (BHL. 213). The author emphasizes that his work is not a new fabrication but a translation from an old English book, except the name of Amphibalus, which he inserted from the history of 'Gaufridus Arturus', that is Geoffrey of Monmouth. He even gives a preface and an epilogue of the alleged predecessor, who pretends to write in the times of the pagans and to conceal his name for fear of his life. But this is forgery; if an English text has existed at all, it cannot have been anything but a first draft as base of the 'translation'.²⁹ The author used Bede's chapter on St. Alban, but this short text was changed into a large piece of work by clumsy inventions after the usual pattern. Alban is not a lone hero in the forefront, but Amphibalus gets a great share of the glory of a martyr. We are informed of Alban's noble Roman origin; the story of the conversion is spun out at length; the tortures and the end of Alban,³⁰ of Amphibalus and of the converted soldier who declined

²⁸ O. G. S. Crawford, *Western Seaways* (in *Custom is King: essays presented to R. R. Marett*, London 1936, 182, n. 2).

²⁹ About the middle of the 13th century the old English text had been changed in the tales of the monks into a history of St. Alban written in the *idioma antiquorum Britonum* or *antiquo Anglico vel Britannico idiomate*, which was found in the ruins of Verulamium in the time of abbot Eadmar in the 10th century. It was deciphered by a learned priest Unwona, and turned at once to dust, when its contents had been made known; see *Gesta abb.* I, 26 f. cp. R. M. Wilson, 'Some lost Saints' Lives in Old and Middle English' (*Modern Language Review* (1941), xxxvi, 161 ff).

³⁰ *in loco qui vulgi consuetudine Holmhorst vocabatur* (§ 17), which may be added to the place-names of Hertfordshire.

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to be executioner, are described with cruel details. Amphibalus, according to William, escaped by Alban's help to Wales, preaching to Welshmen, Picts and *cives*; a thousand men accompanied him to the West, of whom 999 were slain by the persecutors. Amphibalus was brought back to Verulamium for his martyrdom, many were converted again, and another thousand were put to death. The origin of this immense number of martyrs can be recognized with probability. The Martyrologium Hieronymianum on 22 June (*Acta sanct. Nov.* II, 2, p. 330) mentioned martyrs of Antiochia—Julian, two others and 879 more—whose names God alone knows. The apostle Jacobus Alphaei and the martyr Rufinus of Alexandria follow next, but then the large number of unknown (Antiochian) martyrs is repeated, one of the many fatuous repetitions by which the very archetype of the Martyrology was deformed. This time the number (which is more or less disfigured in some copies) is 889, by the addition of an x. Now in the second recension of the Martyrology (BW), which took place in the 7th century in Gaul, the name of the British martyr was entered immediately after Rufinus of Alexandria: *In Brittania Albinus martyr.* The 889 martyrs who had joined Rufinus by the mistake of repetition, were made companions of 'Albinus' in turn by the queer insertion of his name;³¹ only a c and another x had to be added to arrive at 999. This might be the origin of the large number of martyrs in William's Passion; the other thousand men may be an invention without any base, or may be the thousand men who, according to Gildas (above p. 349), followed Alban through the river.

There is no need to dwell on all the fables of the 'translated' author, who pretends to have made careful inquiries at Verulamium (§ 2), and to have written down his knowledge before starting for Rome to be christened there, and to offer his book to the Romans for examination (§ 47). He prophesies the coming of Christian missionaries to Britain who will learn from his writing God's great deeds worked through the martyrs, and will propagate them. He is conscious of extolling the glory of St. Alban, whose merits will be praised all over the world, *si quid mea carmina possunt* (§ 47): everybody knowing Vergil (*Aen.* IX, 446)—there were many in the 'Renaissance of the twelfth century'—might have compared at once Alban and Amphibalus to the friendship of Nisus and Euryalus immortalized by the poet. But the author meant not only literary glorification of his heroes; one

³¹ cp. Delehaye, '*In Britannia*' dans le *Martyrologe Hiéronymien* (loc. cit. 300 f.)

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of his objects was the 'invention' of relics of Amphibalus, the whereabouts of which were hidden as yet, as had been his name a generation before. Amphibalus's terrible sufferings have ended, the pagans are engaged in quarrel and uproar (§ 44): *quidam fidelis in Christo clam beati martyris corpus auferens sub terram occuluit diligenter, quandoque ut confidimus divino munere in lucem proferendum*. Was it William's aim to prepare the discovery by laying the literary foundations?

Archaeologists now might help to make alive the written word. There must have been some knowledge of two ancient mounds, *tumuli*, containing human remains, at Redbourn four miles northwest of St. Albans on Watling Street. What is told of this cemetery, shows, as G. Baldwin Brown has seen,³² that a burial-place of the pagan period of the Anglo-Saxons existed there: modern methods might perhaps find more of it.* Visions seen by Robert, a citizen of St. Albans, are said to have suggested searching the place; miracles followed as soon as the digging had begun; after some days of work, when the brethren were sitting in the refectory listening to a recital of William's *Passio*, a message came that the bodies of Amphibalus and of three companions and of six others nearby had been discovered, on the 25th June 1177 (not 1178). They were brought to the abbey, a solemn procession with St. Alban's shrine moved to meet them; very soon a precious shrine of St. Amphibalus found its place in the abbey-church near that of St. Alban, and contributed to make St. Albans 'the most brilliant' of the English monasteries in the later Middle Ages.³³

Monastic and popular imagination discovered more. In the marshy grounds near the Ver there existed a little church of St. Germanus (now St. Germain's farm), which was said to have been built in the time of abbot Eadfrid (about 900?) for a hermitage. The name of the patron-saint caused the story that Germanus had stayed in a house at

³² *The Arts in Early England*, 1915, III, 120 f.; cp. Baring-Gould and Fisher, loc. cit. I, 153. On Redbourn see M. Reddan, *Vict. Hist. Hertfordshire*, IV, 416 ff.; cp. II, 364 ff.

* It seems most probable that the human remains found at Redbourn consisted of secondary burials in a pre-existing (Roman or earlier) barrow, as at Dunstable; and I have already marked the site as such on the Ordnance Survey 'Dark Ages' map. Primary Saxon barrows were normally either very small—in which case they occurred not singly or in pairs but in large groups set close together, as in many Kentish cemeteries—or else they covered primary cremations. The fact that Redbourn stands right on Watling Street makes it probable that the barrow was of the Roman period.—O.G.S.C.

³³ V. H. Galbraith, *The Abbey of St. Albans from 1300 to the Dissolution of the Monasteries* (Oxford 1911), p. 3.

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this place, when he visited the martyr's tomb in 429 and took not only dust from it (above p. 347) but raised the very body of the saint (*Gesta abb.* I, 20 f.). The monks knew also where Alban's relics were preserved after the 'invention' of 793, until the abbey-church of Offa was finished: in the middle of the 13th century the chapel of 'Sancta Syon' was said to have given them shelter in the meantime. Where had the 999 companions of Amphibalus suffered in returning with him from Wales? A popular etymology of the name of Lichfield gave to this town the fame of having seen the massacre of the crowd. In accordance with medieval custom³⁴ William's *Passio* in prose was adapted to distichs by his friend Radulf of Dunstable (BHL. 212). About 1250 a French poem of similar contents was composed by Matthew Paris, where the converted executioner also got his name, Heraclius (*Aracle*).³⁵ But the legend of the saint himself was growing. William had spoken of Alban's noble Roman descent, but had not told his former life—fiction had to fill this gap. The 'primacy' (*primatus*) of Albion under the Caesar was ascribed to him; now he got a military career.³⁶ The poem of John Lydgate on SS. Albon and Amphibale composed in 1439 for abbot John Whethamstede, and the *Tractatus de nobilitate, vita et martyrio SS. Albani et Amphibali e Gallico in Latinum translatus* signify the culmination of this development, which need not be followed here, nor its expression in art.

But in the meantime the monks of St. Albans by chance had touched the very heart of their original church; here again archaeological research perhaps might be able to supply the deficiencies of our knowledge. The eastern part of the church had to be pulled down for

³⁴ E. R. Curtius, 'Dichtung und Rhetorik im Mittelalter' (*Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 1938, XVI, 435 ff).

³⁵ ed. R. Atkinson, *Vie de seint Auban*, 1876; partly *Illustr.* pl. 1-30. The Latin form Heraclius is given by John of Tynemouth, *Nova Legenda Anglie*, ed. C. Horstman (Oxford 1901), I, 33.

³⁶ *Inventio Albani* in Dublin ms. fol. 52-52 v, *Illustr.* pl. 32, 33; cp. Usserius, *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates*, Dublin, 1639, 981 (London, 1687, 83; *Works of James Ussher*, ed. Elrington, v, 190). The same 982 (83; 191) prints a text calling Alban *magistrum militum totius Britanniae*, which is said to be taken from *libro, quem Dominus Iohannes Mansel specialis Domini Regis clericus et consiliarius attulit de Hispania*; a part of the text relies on Geoffrey of Monmouth. The reference seems to depend on Dublin ms. fol. 22, cp. Atkinson p. VII, XII. On John Mansel, the famous counsellor of Henry III, who died in 1265, see Kingsford, *Dict. of Nat. Biogr.*, xxxvi, 84 ff. He was sent to Castile in 1253 and 1254, and came to St. Albans with the queen in October 1259. The French poem v. 21 (Atkinson, p. 3) calls Alban *de la cité un haut maréchal*.

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restoration and extension some years after the middle of the 13th century. In demolishing the walls and in testing the strength of the foundations, the workmen discovered, near the old feretory under the pavement on the 2nd day of January (*in octavis S. Stephani*) 1257 a 'mausoleum' with a tomb of stone. It was thought to be the first place of rest of St. Alban; a leaden inscription suggested it, probably put there when the relics were removed to a shrine.³⁷ The interpretation may have been right. A martyr's tomb in old times was regarded with respect; its situation gave origin to the first *martyrium*, as well as direction to enlargement and rebuilding of the church, and when the custom of elevations and translations in the West also prevailed, there is some probability that the shrine with the patron-saint's relics was put in or above an altar at or near the same place, where the sacred bones were buried before under the pavement.

Now I resume the comparison with Bonn which I made in the beginning (p. 338). The present crypt of Bonn minster which is situated under the chancel, was built in the 11th and 12th centuries; but excavations of 1928-30 disclosed under it a Roman and Frankish cemetery, a Carolingian church and the original *martyrium* of the late fourth century. The foundations contained a large number of Roman inscriptions and sculptures, for the most part pagan dedication-stones of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Roman Verulamium also is known to have been a quarry to St. Albans. At Bonn the *tumba* of the martyrs Cassius and Florentius was the 'heart' of the building through all its vicissitudes and changes even of the axis. Discoveries of the same kind were made in the northern part of the Rhineland at Xanten, where the fine church of St. Victor also has its place on a Roman cemetery outside the walls of the *Colonia Traiana*. By excavations of 1933 under the pavement of the Gothic chancel remains of older buildings were brought to light, which comprised a church of late Roman times and even the undisturbed bones of the martyrs. The question is whether the 'mausoleum' found in 1257 under the chancel of St. Alban's church is pointing the way to vestiges of Roman Christianity too. The inhabitants of medieval St. Albans had before their eyes the ancient ruins which they exploited. A writer of the abbey applied the celebrated verses of Hildebert of Tours on Rome to his own town: *O Verolanium, civitatis antique ruina potius quam edificium, felicior*

³⁷ See Usserius 986 (88; 202) from Dublin ms. fol. 70 v, cp. ib. 980 f. (77; 178); Matth. Par., *Chron. Maj.*, v, 608 f. 'It seems that there has never been an eastern crypt' at St. Albans (*Vict. Hist. Hertf.*, II, 484).

ST. ALBAN AND ST. ALBANS

*hodie in cun(c)tis nacionibus predicaris confracta, quam in deliciosis supellectilibus extiteris integra, que quanti fueris integra, rupta doces.*³⁸ Modern archaeological research has revived ancient Verulamium (Corder, above, 113-24), and Isca-Caerleon. The personalities of the martyrs Alban, Julius and Aaron will never be known. But they were objects of worship already in the fifth (429) and sixth (Gildas) centuries. Let us hope that the possibility exists, and that the opportunity will arise to bring to light some day at least the concrete evidence of this early devotion of a transitional period of British history in the Dark Ages.

³⁸ *Inventio Albani* in Dublin MS. fol. 55, Usserius 981 (83; 190), *Illustr.*, pl. 38; Hildebert's elegy may have been known to the author from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum* IV, 351 (ed. Stubbs II, 403); but it is also found elsewhere.