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Joseph of Arimathea came to Britain

by Alan Wilson & Baram Blakett

Christianity arrived in Khumry-Wales in AD 37, in "the last year of Tiberius". This is attested by the official historians of the Church of Rome, Cardinal Baronius, the Vatican Librarian, writing around AD 1530, and Cardinal Alford (Griffiths) – as well as by the British monks Gildas (Aneurin y Coed Aur), who lived AD 540-600, and Nennius, who wrote circa AD 800.

Later writers had to be very careful as Christianity officially arrived in Eastern England in AD 597, with Austin-Augustine of Canterbury, who converted the immigrant Saxons and Angles. Yet Austin met with seven British bishops in AD 600 at Aust in the west of Britain, on the Severn estuary. Pelagius, a British monk, had denied the doctrine of original sin as developed by Augustine of Hippo, arguing instead for free will. This was in the early AD 400s. Before that, three named British bishops had attended the Council of Sardonica in AD 347 and three more the Council of Arles in AD 314. The Roman Empress Helena was, we believe, a Christian and a British Princess [see More 2]. Earlier still, King Lierwg (known to the Romans as Lucius or Luke) had corresponded with Eleutherius, Bishop of Rome, around AD 178-180, as Christian to Christian. All this is in the official Church records. There is also a record of there being archbishops in London from the second century AD [see More 1]. So Austin did not bring Christianity to Britain, though he did bring Roman Catholicism.

When the English later became dominant on the island of Great Britain, and even after they had set up the breakaway Church of England, it was still unwelcome to suggest that Christianity was in the west of Britain before the east and that it was in Britain before Rome. So many Khumric texts were doctored to avoid trouble.

The story was retold, for example, in such a way as to have Eurgain the daughter of King Caradoc I bring back Joseph of Arimathea to Britain from Rome around AD 58. In fact, Joseph had arrived in Britain twenty years earlier and he never was in Rome. As is made clear by Jowett, the nineteenth century religious historian, and others Christianity went from Britain to Rome, carried by the family of King Caradoc from South Wales.

The Romans invaded Britain in AD 43. They gained a hold on the south of the island of Great Britain but had difficulties on their western flank. This was because of the Essyllwg - miscalled 'Siluria' - which was certainly South Wales. The Silurians were so dangerous that Roman generals were told not to engage with them. The nephew of

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King Caradoc I, Ceri Longsword, King of Essyllwg, succeeded his uncle as Battle Sovereign. He built fleets and denied the Romans access to western Britain and successfully kept them out of Wales until AD 74, when there was a battle which both sides claimed as a victory.

The Romans attempted an accommodation with the British kings in the west but after an apparent massacre of the women and children at the Vale of the Martyrs (where they had been placed away from the battle field), claimed by the Romans as a victory, the mighty King Baram (Bonassus), son of Ceri, drove the Romans clean out of Britain. This was in AD 80. As Tacitus puts it, "Bonasus usurped the empire in Britain". Note that there were no Roman governors or officials in Britain from AD 80-125. The enraged Emperor Domitian had the expelled Roman governor of south-east Britain, Salustus, executed.

Returning to Joseph of Arimathea, he had journeyed up the river Rhone, along the River Loire and across to West Britain from Bordeaux. He did not come across the Channel. Joseph, who was not in our view a tin trader as is often said, arrived in South East Wales in AD 37 and began to establish there Apostolic Christianity. He was the first Christian missionary anywhere. The famous Llywel Stone, now in the British Museum in London, shows scenes of the Christian arrival from the Eastern Mediterranean. Joseph became known in Britain as St Ilid. Church sites dedicated to St Ilid are still extant in Glamorgan and Brecon. His first site was Llanilid at Tonyrefail

King Caradoc I led the British resistance to the Romans, from AD 43 -51. He was betrayed and the Romans took him with his family to Rome. With Caradoc and his ilk went Christianity, as given them by Joseph of Arimathea. Linus, a son of King Caradoc I, became the first Bishop of Rome in AD 58. St Paul was not in Rome until around AD 66 and St Peter never went there.

In Rome Gladys, sister of Caradoc, changed her name to Claudia and married a Roman, Aulus Plautius. Eurgain, the daughter of King Caradoc I, also married a Roman, Rufus Pudens. Claudia was later put on trial for being a pagan as she was a Christian and declined to worship Jupiter, Mars and the rest of the Roman pantheon. She was ultimately acquitted.

King Bran was an infant in Rome and a great-grandson of King Caradoc I. Bran grew up and had a son King Caradoc II. This has caused confusion amongst some researchers, who fail to see that there were two King Caradocs. The first was the son of Arch, the second of Bran. The latter became a famous Christian and was known as Bran the Blessed.

Referring again to events in Britain, Joseph had moved into modern-day England after being granted lands there by King Arviragus. This king was a ferocious enemy of the invaders and the idea of a Roman 'conquest' of Britain in this period is laughable. The first century Roman poet Juvenal wrote to the effect that if the Roman Emperor were lucky Arviragus would fall from his British chariot-pole and die.

The king in the east of Britain had been Cynfelyn – known as Cunobelinus to the Romans and called Cymbeline by Shakespeare. When Cynfelyn died he was

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succeeded by Gweirydd, a name Latinised to Guiderius in the chronicles. During the Claudian invasion, Gweirydd was cut down treacherously. His younger brother Arviragus assumed the mantle of kingship in Gweirydd's stead, taking the battle to the Romans and slaying the traitor.

The granting of land was a king's prerogative or needed the king's permission, so Arviragus must presumably have been king already when he granted land for Joseph to found a Christian community that some have described as a university. This would put it about AD 45 or after. Where was this community sited? The answer was that it was near Atherston in Warwickshire at a place called Glastinbri. *Glastons* in Breton and Cornish means 'place of oak trees', while in the related Khumric-Welsh tongue *Glastenau* means 'the scarlet oak'. So the area was one of oak trees. There are plenty of meetings under oaks and stones under oaks in the Old Testament.

There was a later ridiculous confusion between the true Glastinbri in Warwickshire and Glastonbury in Somerset, but the Christian community at the latter site was not even founded until AD 941. Research places Joseph's foundation very firmly at Oldbury, south-east of Atherston. This is where there is the great ancient graveyard where multitudes of the illustrious British are buried.

Caradoc of Llancarfan and Matthew of Westminster gave directions on how to get to 'Glastonbury' and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle cites a Glastenic holy place in the seventh century. All that is necessary to locate Joseph's community is to take the dozen available directions and follow them faithfully. They take you unerringly to Old Bury – 'old burial place' – at Oldbury in East Atherston. The name Atherston can itself be translated readily enough and conveys an intriguing piece of information relating to a later era: *Arthur's Grave Mound* (Twyn).

The great road cited in the historical directions is Watling Street. This runs from London to Wroxeter-Viroconium, the former capital city – and this great ancient (pre-Roman) road runs straight through Atherston. Then the great scraped-out ditch cited is very clearly Offa's Dyke. Great woods are mentioned called the Ardennes. These can be traced via a dozen Arden names - Henley in Arden and so on. These woods stretched around the areas south of what is now Birmingham and Coventry. Carry on with the designations and you get to Glastonbury at Old Bury in the Midlands.

St Collen of Llangollen was a regular visitor to 'Glastonbury' and Llangollen is a short distance west of Oldbury-Atherston. St David, when at Llanthony Abbey in Northern Gwent, was also a regular visitor. These people could not possibly have gone south-east to the Gloucester area and then west to the Somerset Glastonbury. There is no great ancient graveyard there, where the great figures of Britain were buried – and according to the old directions there has to be. There are, though, many huge ancient grave mounds in the vast cemetery at Oldbury, Atherston.

All the place names around Atherston and Oldbury are clearly unmistakable ancient Khumric Welsh. They translate well enough: "free grazing for sheep", "granted free without taxation", "ploughland of the Court", etc. This is all quite correct Welsh in what is now central England.

A degree of accommodation was reached between the Roman invaders and the eastern realm, with Arviragus marrying a 'daughter' of the Emperor Claudius. Claudius

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founded the city of Gloucester in AD 48 on the eastern bank of the Severn River, which was the boundary between Khumry (Wales) and Lloegres (England). The body of Arviragus's heroic brother Gweirydd was moved there and doubtless prayed over. Another name for Gweirydd is George. We believe in fact that this is the true St George. Arviragus it was who granted land to Joseph of Arimathea, but we think he was carrying out his brother's wishes. It was for offering sanctuary to the Holy Family that George's fame was to run far and wide, until that fame was snuffed out.

The later Roman Catholics found it troubling that Christianity came first to Britain, before Rome, so a false narrative was developed for St George. This story relates to a Roman soldier in the early AD 300s who defied an imperial edict to sacrifice to the pagan gods – a defiance allegedly uttered to the Emperor Diocletian himself. This George had a father who came from Cappadocia, in modern-day Turkey. This geographical information led in turn to a confusion with a disreputable later George of Cappadocia. In short, the feeble Christian backstory on George was a smokescreen, meant to occlude the British origin of Christianity.

We believe that Joseph of Arimathea gave Arviragus the Flag of St George, as a gesture of gratitude for the gift of land, sanctuary, respect and friendship. An example of the use of the Cross of St George is on the official coat of arms of the City of London. (There is a sword in the upper left quarter, incidentally. That sword was the one taken by the defending Britons from Julius Caesar during his abortive invasion of Britain in 55 BC; it is not, as is said, the sword that beheaded St Paul – a ridiculous notion in the context of Roman execution methods – nor is it a dagger used in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.)

The official Church story of St George offers no rationale for the existence of the Cross of St George in England.

The flag's symbolism can be unpacked as follows. If you take the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, they are represented by 1) the Man, 2) the Eagle, 3) the Lion and 4) the Bull. Now look at a star map or, better still, gaze at the heavens on a dark night and you will see that a line from Leo the Lion to Equilius the Eagle passes through the Pole Star, the still centre of the rotating night sky. Now see that a line from Taurus the Bull passes through the Pole Star to Hercules the Man. The idea is that God promised stability on Earth by maintaining the position and posture of Earth in relation to the Heavens. This is the meaning of the Cross of St George, brought from the Holy Land by Joseph of Arimathea.

Many other nations and cities have adopted St George as their patron saint and have likewise borne aloft his flag. Yet of only one nation is he the uniquely appropriate patron saint and of only one nation is the Cross of St George the uniquely appropriate symbol: England.

Alan Wilson and Baram Blackett are the authors of *Arthur & the Charters of the Kings*, *The King Arthur Conspiracy* and *The Trojan War of 650 BC*