

The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church



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The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church

Third Edition with New Material

By

Frederick Edward Warren

**Introduction by
Neil Xavier O'Donoghue**



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INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION OF

F. E. WARREN'S *LITURGY AND RITUAL OF THE CELTIC CHURCH*

BY FR. NEIL XAVIER O'DONOGHUE, PH.D.

It is a testament to the scholarship of Frederick Edward Warren that, more than 125 years after its original publication, his volume on *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* still remains the first port of call for those interested in the liturgy of early Ireland.¹ It is still the most significant treatment of the liturgy of Early Christian Ireland² and despite a vast quantity of liturgical and historical scholarship on various aspects of Ireland, the so-called “Celtic Church” and early medieval liturgy, Warren’s volume is still indispensable for anybody interested in serious study.

The Reverend Frederick Edward Warren (1843–1930), was a Fellow of St John’s College, Oxford, and later served as pastor of Frenchay, near Bristol and then Bardwell in Suffolk. Like all authors, Warren was conditioned by his particular situation and the currents of his time. He was ministering in the Church of England during the years after the Oxford Movement had helped the Established Church to rediscover the liturgical heritage of Western Christendom. But as a number of the more prominent members of the Oxford Movement formally entered into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church (notably the future Cardinals Newman and Manning), some in the Church of England needed to reassert the value of a traditional liturgy that was not Roman.³ As the birth of the English Church was inexorably intertwined with St Augustine of Canterbury’s papally sponsored mission, the earliest examples of English liturgy were perceived to be very Roman in their origins.⁴ This meant that those Victorian Anglicans who were searching for a

¹ A second edition of this work was published in 1987 by the Boydell Press with a Monograph and Updated Bibliography by Jane Stevenson. Although this has also been out of print for some time, Professor Stevenson’s monograph still remains quite useful. I myself recently completed my Ph.D. thesis on *The Eucharist in Pre-Norman Ireland* and I hope to publish a revised edition of this through the University of Notre Dame Press. Having consulted with Professor Stevenson, it was decided to republish this edition of *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* with a shorter introduction and annotated bibliography. This gives direction to those interested in advanced research on early Irish liturgy. My forthcoming book will contain a more comprehensive historical background, textual and iconographic analysis and a complete bibliography.

² The early medieval or Pre-Norman period in Ireland is customarily referred to as Early Christian Ireland.

³ Henry Chadwick, preface to *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* Second Facsimile Edition, vii and Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1997), 574–8.

⁴ Paradoxically, this reliance on Roman liturgical practice in the formation of the English Church was in stark contrast to the very liberal prescriptions which Bede reports Gregory the Great giving to Augustine in his dealings with the pre-existing Christians and their liturgical uses: “Augustine’s second question. Even though the faith is one are there varying

non-Roman precedent of liturgical practice were unable to find much useful material in the early English Church.⁵ This understanding encouraged some scholars within the Church of England to look to those pre-Augustinian Christians who had dwelt on the island of Britain for other more ancient non-Roman liturgical traditions.

Britain was incorporated into the Roman Empire in 43 AD and remained part of the Empire until about the year 410 when the Roman legions left Britain. Christianity had been introduced into Britain sometime during this period. While many areas of Western Europe experienced a large degree of cultural continuity after the so-called fall of the Roman Empire, most modern historians believe that the level of this continuity was far weaker in post-Roman Britain than on the Continent. But the Christian Church did survive and was perhaps the most important element of civilization introduced during Britain's time as part of the Roman Empire to outlive her membership in the Empire.⁶ History would credit St Augustine of Canterbury (d. 604) and his Roman missionaries with the evangelization the Anglo-Saxon tribes and kingdoms which were to form the cultural nucleus of modern England. Yet there was a strong Christian presence in Britain prior to the Augustinian mission. While for many reasons these original British Christians did not manage to Christianize all of the Anglo-Saxon invaders, very significantly they did succeed in the evangelization of Ireland. St Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, is the most famous son of the British Church.⁷ His Irish mission is traditionally dated to 433–93 and pre-dates the Augustinian mission to Canterbury by about 150 years.

customs in the churches? and is there one form of mass in the Holy Roman Church and another in the Gaulish churches? Pope Gregory answered: My brother, you know the customs of the Roman Church in which, of course, you were brought up. But it is my wish that if you have found any customs in the Roman or the Gaulish church or any other church which may be more pleasing to God, you should make a careful selection of them and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which is still new in the faith, what you have been able to gather from other churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of place, but places are to be loved for the sake of their good things. Therefore choose from every individual Church whatever things are devout religious, and right. And when you have collected these as it were into one bundle, see that the minds of the English grow accustomed to it." *Ecclesiastical History* 1.27 in Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1969), 80–3.

⁵ Archdale A. King, *Liturgies of the Past* (London: Longmans, 1959), 278 and Charles Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981), 83–4. However, today's scholarship tends to see much more continuity in British Christianity in general before and after the Anglo-Saxon arrival than was the case in earlier scholarship, see John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 10–34.

⁶ Nicholas Higham, *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London: Seaby, 1992), 214–16.

⁷ For more on St Patrick and his mission to Ireland see Ludwig Bieler, trans. and ed., *The Works of St. Patrick and St. Secundinus' Hymn on St. Patrick*, *Ancient Christian Writers* Vol. 17 (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1953) and David N. Dumville, ed., *St. Patrick: AD 493–1993* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1993).

When Warren and others set out to search for the liturgical heritage of the pre-Roman British Church they had to confront the sad reality that extremely little material remains of the liturgical uses of this period from Britain itself. However, while scholars of the liturgy in early Ireland might lament the lack of material available, in fact, a great deal more material survives from early Ireland than from early Britain or England, and it is for this reason that Warren's book is very heavily Irish in its content. This predominance of Irish material is so overwhelming that, at least in the liturgical context, the term "Celtic Church" is almost synonymous with Early Christian or pre-Norman Ireland. While Warren and his coreligionists would, undoubtedly, have preferred a more British content for the book, they were happy to settle for a collection of mainly Irish material, reassured that if Ireland had been evangelized by British Christians then there was a fair certainty that the liturgical practices of Ireland would have been similar to those of early Christian Britain, thus guaranteeing a non-Roman ancient liturgical pedigree for the British Isles.

When dealing with Ireland, Warren, like so many other people over the centuries, was smitten by a certain romanticism.⁸ The Irish are, to use the words of St Columbanus (d. 615), the "inhabitants of the world's edge"⁹ and it seems that there has always been a natural tendency to find much of the weird and wonderful in Early Christian Ireland. This tendency is already evident in the Classical authors' treatment of Ireland¹⁰ and later in the twelfth century in Gerald of Wales' wonderful tales of Ireland.¹¹ Even in our own days many seem to think of Early Christian Ireland as "a Dark Age Hippy Colony inhabited by gentle gurus doing their own Christian thing far removed from the stultifying influence of sub-Roman bishops and their dioceses."¹² Indeed, the idea that the Irish had a different type of Church was very popular up until very recently. The dominant theory was that the monastic

⁸ This was particularly true given that Warren's age also saw the birth of the modern ethnic concept of Celt, see Marcus Tanner, *The Last of the Celts* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 2004), 10–26. Warren naturally saw a close kinship to pre-English British Christianity and liturgy in the evidence he studies from early Ireland. However, in fact, in the Early Middle Ages there was little sense of cultural or ethnic identity between the populations of Britain and Ireland; Old Irish and Old Welsh (which was spoken by the early British) were most probably mutually unintelligible and the inability to understand each other was one of the factors that contributed to the adoption of Latin as an academic language in Early Christian Ireland. Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity AD 200–1000*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 239.

⁹ "Ultimi habitatores mundi," *Epistula* 5.23 in G. S. M. Walker, *Sancti Columbani Opera, Scriptorum Latini Hiberniae* Vol. 2 (Dublin: School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1957), 38–9.

¹⁰ For a full collection of the Classical and Patristic treatment of Ireland see Philip Freeman, *Ireland and the Classical World* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001).

¹¹ An accessible translation can be found in John J. O'Meara, trans., *Gerald of Wales: The History and Topography of Ireland* (London: Penguin, 1982).

¹² Alfred J. Smyth, "The Golden Age of Early Irish Monasticism: Myth or Reality?" in Brendan Bradshaw and Dáire Keogh, eds., *Christianity in Ireland: Revisiting the Story* (Dublin: Columba, 2002), 21.

element of the Church in Ireland overshadowed the episcopal and that abbots took the place of bishops so that the bishops were relegated almost to the position of chaplains to the abbots with the function of ordaining monks as priests at the abbots' requests.¹³ But today most historians of Early Christian Ireland would disagree with the assertion that an independent "Celtic Church" ever existed. There are major problems with the very concept and this supposed Church is rooted more in place than in time.¹⁴ In this vein most popular works will juxtapose Julius Caesar's *De bello gallico* with medieval Irish hagiography, and Alexander Carmichael's late-nineteenth century collection of Scottish folklore, thus producing a vision of Christianity more at home on the shelves of the New Age section of a trendy bookstore than in the pages of a history book.

A continuing legacy of Warren that must still be faced today is the status of the Celtic Rite. Paradoxically, while the concept of "Rite" is very important in liturgical studies, most modern works never give a definition of this technical term. Taft is one of the very few contemporary authors to give a specific definition. He sees a rite as "a coherent, unified corpus of liturgical usages followed by all churches within a single ecclesiastical conscription."¹⁵ Obviously the whole thrust of Warren's *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* is that a separate Celtic Rite existed and that today we can partially reconstruct it. Warren is still the main proponent of this separate Celtic Rite and, following him, many older standard works propose the existence of this rite.¹⁶ Today very few scholars would hold that a separate Celtic Rite ever ex-

¹³ This is not to deny that monasticism was very important in Early Christian Ireland (as in many other parts of Christendom), and that some individual abbots may have had more personal prestige than some bishops. But the earlier conception of a monastic-domination of the Irish Church has recently been seriously challenged, see Richard Sharpe, "Some Problems Concerning the Organization of the Church in Early Medieval Ireland," *Peritia* 3 (1984): 230–70, and Colmán Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland: AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, Co. Kildare: Laigin Publications, 1999).

¹⁴ Wendy Davies, "The Myth of the Celtic Church" in Nancy Edwards and A. Lane, eds., *The Early Church in Wales and the West: Recent Work in Early Christian Archaeology, History and Place-Names*, Oxbrow Monograph 16 (Oxford: Oxbrow Books, 1992), 12.

¹⁵ Robert F. Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: a Short History* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 24.

¹⁶ Perhaps most influentially in Louis Gougaud, "Celtiques (liturgies)," in F. Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, eds., *Dictionnaire D'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie* (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1922), 2/2: 2969–3032. Today the article in the original 1908 edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* is also still very influential as it is readily available on the internet and forms the basis of the article on The Celtic Rite in Wikipedia (Henry Jenner, "The Celtic Rite," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* [New York: Macmillan, 1908], 3:493–504). The standard history of the Mass in the West also accepts the existence of a separate Celtic Rite, see Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: its Origins and Development. (Missarum Solemnia)*, Francis A. Brunner, trans. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1951), 1:45. Even today, some more modern works still continue to propose the existence of a Celtic Rite, e.g., Antonio C. Molinero, *Las Otras Liturgias Occidentales* (Bilbao: Ediciones EGA, 1992), 51–75.

isted and the weight of scholarly opinion today is that the liturgy of Ireland and the other Celtic regions belonged to the wider Gallican liturgical tradition.¹⁷

In the Early Middle Ages the Gallican Rite was the most widespread of the liturgical traditions in Western Europe. Besides Ireland, present-day France, Germany and the Low Countries all celebrated the liturgy using a form of the Gallican Rite. The Gallican Rite was also closely related to the Northern Italian liturgical traditions¹⁸ and it even seems that the Hispanic (or Mozarabic) Rite evolved from the same common ancestor as the Gallican Rite.¹⁹ The other main Western Rite is that of Rome. Older histories speak of how the Roman Rite gradually displaced the Gallican Rite. Charlemagne is often credited with the abolition of the Gallican Rite and the forced imposition of the Roman Rite in his domains.²⁰ However contemporary scholarship sees Charlemagne's liturgical efforts in less radical terms and emphasizes

¹⁷ Marc Schneiders summarizes the evidence for the use of the Gallican Rite in Early Christian Ireland in "The Origins of the Early Irish Liturgy," in Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Michael Richter, eds., *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: Learning and Literature* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996), 76–98.

¹⁸ Some authors hold that early Irish liturgy was closer to the liturgies of Northern Italy than to France. This is the conclusion reached by Hugh Kennedy in his important doctoral dissertation on the *Stowe Missal*, Hugh P. Kennedy, *Tinkering Embellishment or Liturgical Fidelity? An Investigation into Liturgical Practice in Ireland before the 12th Century Reform Movement as Illustrated in the Stowe Missal*, Unpublished D.D. Thesis, Pontifical University, St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, 1994. For the most recent work on the connection between Ireland and Northern Italy, even though it doesn't deal with liturgical matters, see Michael Richter, *Bobbio in the Early Middle Ages: the Abiding Legacy of Columbanus* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008).

¹⁹ The standard work on the Gallican Rite in English is W. S. Porter, *The Gallican Rite* (London: Mowbray, 1958), although a much more comprehensive and up to date treatment can be found in Matthieu Smyth, *La Liturgie Oubliée: La Prière Eucharistique en Gaule Antique et dans l'Occident non Romain* (Paris: Les Éditions Du Cerf, 2003). Also see, Jordi Pinell i Pons "History of the Liturgies in the Non-Roman West," in Ansgar J. Chupungco, ed., *Introduction to the Liturgy*, Vol. 1 of the Pontifical Liturgical Institute, Handbook for Liturgical Studies (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 179–95; Jordi Pinell i Pons, "Gallicana (Liturgia)" and "Hispanica (Liturgia)" in Angelo Di Berardino, ed., *Diccionario Patristico y de la Antigüedad. Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum – Roma* (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1991), 1:910–14 and 1:1047–53 and Achille Triacca, "Liturgia Ambrosiana" and J. Bohajar, "Liturgia Hispana," in Domenico Sartore, Achille M. Triacca and Juan María Canals, eds., *Nuevo Diccionario de Liturgia*, 3rd Spanish edition (Madrid: San Pablo, 1996), cols. 53–96 and 943–62.

²⁰ Particular emphasis is given to the so-called *Hadrianum Sacramentary*. Charlemagne asked Pope Hadrian to send him a typical Roman sacramentary with the liturgy of Pope Gregory the Great. This was a difficult task as Rome did not have a common sacramentary at the time and the manuscript that was eventually sent was for use in papal stational liturgies and quite incomplete for use in a cathedral or parish outside of Rome, see Cyrille Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy: an Introduction to the Sources*, Revised and Translated by William Storey and Niels Rasmussen (Portland, OR: The Pastoral Press, 1986), 80–5, and Éric Palazzo, *A History of Liturgical Books: from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*, Madeleine Beaumont, trans. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 50–4.

the continuity of earlier liturgical traditions in the Carolingian domains.²¹ Complete liturgical standardization in any given area remained impossible until the invention of the printing press,²² but it is helpful to see the history of Western liturgy in the Early and High Middle Ages as the history of the homogenization of the Roman Rite with the various Gallican traditions. The Roman Canon as the central prayer of the Mass was universally adopted and gave a Roman imprint to the whole liturgy, but virtually all of the other elements, from chant melodies, to feast days, to the texts of various prayers, prefaces and other liturgical traditions, were equally likely to be of either Gallican or Roman origin.

While Ireland was not as individual in her liturgical practices as once thought, nonetheless early Irish liturgy is an important part of the European whole. In my opinion, the most important indication of the integration of early Ireland is the debate over the origin of the *Bobbio Missal*.²³ This missal (now in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, *codex latini* 13246)²⁴ takes its name from its earlier home in the northern Italian monastery of Bobbio, a monastery founded by St Columbanus, the most famous of the early Irish missionaries to Continental Europe. Mainly on the basis of its connection with the monastery of Bobbio, many earlier scholars ascribed this manuscript to the Celtic Rite.²⁵ Yet today few would hold that there is any Irish or Celtic connection whatsoever with the missal, they would rather see it as an important example of a missal of the Gallican Rite, albeit with Roman influences.²⁶ But the very fact that serious scholars could disagree on the Irish origins of this missal shows just how typical Ireland and her liturgy were in the greater Western European context.²⁷

²¹ Yitzhak Hen, *The Royal Patronage of the Liturgy in Frankish Gaul: to the Death of Charles the Bald* (877) (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Henry Bradshaw Society/The Boydell Press, 2001), 65–95.

²² The revised liturgical ritual books which were promulgated in the wake of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, were to be the first fully standardized liturgical books. But it must be remembered that, from a practical point of view, it is impossible to fully standardize the liturgy and local circumstances and eccentricities of individual priests will always result in some variations in the performance of the liturgical rites.

²³ The acts of an important conference on this missal have recently been published, Yitzhak Hen and Rob Meens, eds., *The Bobbio Missal: Liturgy and Religious Culture in Merovingian Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁴ Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, 323.

²⁵ E.g. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 1:45; Jenner, “The Celtic Rite,” 496 and Gougaud, “Celtiques (liturgies),” 2971. Although, Warren himself did not accept it as Irish in origin, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church*, 272–3.

²⁶ Vogel, *Medieval Liturgy*, 323–4; Bernard Botte, *Le Canon de la Messe Romaine: Édition Critique, Introduction et Notes* (Louvain: Abbaye de Mont César, 1935), 11; Gregory Woolfenden, “The Medieval Western Rites,” in Cheslyn Jones, Edward Yarnold, Geoffrey Wainwright and Paul Bradshaw, eds., *The Study of Liturgy* (New York: Oxford University Press, Revised Edition, 1992), 266 and Louis Bouyer, *Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer*, C. Quinn, trans. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968), 319.

²⁷ It is also interesting to note that the *Drummond* and *Corpus* missals, two missals that were traditionally identified as being examples of liturgy in the post-Norman period in Ire-

Yet this contemporary challenge to the existence of a separate Celtic Rite does not change the fact that *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* retains its important place. Besides its obvious value as a work of historiography and as an example of late-nineteenth century attitudes to the early British and Irish Churches, the work has value as a compendium and analysis of early texts, some of which have yet to be published in accessible modern critical editions. But it would be a mistake to take Warren as the final word on the subject, since there have been some major developments in the fields of liturgical studies and the history and archaeology of Early Christian Ireland. The annotated bibliography at the end of this introduction should provide a guide to some fundamental publications for those who wish to delve deeper. Above all, many important critical editions of texts of the period have been published. Of these mention must be made of the Irish *Palimpsest Sacramentary* of Munich. A critical edition of this sacramentary was published in 1964²⁸ and partly because this source was unknown to Warren when he was compiling *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* it is also not mentioned in a lot of secondary works.²⁹ Analysis of the handwriting used in the sacramentary suggests that it was written in Ireland around the year 650 and it later made its way to Reichenau where it was “re-cycled” as a palimpsest in the ninth century. Modern technology allowed a partial reconstruction of the original text and it is clearly of a Gallican type with some Roman and Spanish influences. As the sacramentary was originally written about 150 years before the *Stowe Missal*, it is undoubtedly the most important textual source that is not included in Warren’s collection.

In addition to the many published primary sources, the last century has seen major developments in the field of liturgical studies. So much has been written that it is hard to pick just a few titles that can serve as a useful springboard for those who wish to enter the field. The need for further study of general liturgical scholarship is particularly acute given that the world has greatly changed since Warren’s day and it can no longer be taken for granted that everyone interested in the study of Early Christian Ireland will already have a background in the foundations of Christian liturgical practice. The last few years have also seen an important emphasis in liturgical studies on the experience of regular worshippers as opposed to the “elites” of Christianity. The other areas of study that have vastly expanded since Warren’s time

land when the last vestiges of native liturgical practice had been displaced by the Norman invaders who brought current English and French liturgical practices, are now proposed to be pre-Norman by some scholars. See, Martin Holland, “On the Dating of the Corpus Irish Missal,” *Peritia* 15 (2001): 280–301 and Aubrey Gwynn, *The Irish Church in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, Gerard O’Brien, ed. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1992), 17–33.

²⁸ Alban Dold and Leo Eizenhöfer, *Das Irische Palimpsestakramentar im CLM 14429: Der Staatsbibliothek München* (Beuron: Beuronener Kunstverlag, 1964).

²⁹ Some scholars have also been hesitant in accepting it as being “really” Irish as the Sacramentary is so clearly Gallican and thus its acceptance became problematic for those who proposed the existence of the Celtic Rite.

are the interpretation of the remaining physical artifacts³⁰ and ecclesiastical sites of the period and a renewed understanding of early Christian iconography, all of which provide an important corollary to the simple analysis of texts that dominated the field of liturgical studies until very recently.

In my opinion, all of these developments allow us to build on Warren's masterpiece. It is my hope that this new edition of *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* will provide a starting point for those who wish to study early Irish liturgy. Today this study's goal ought not be the discovery of a separate Celtic Church or some liturgical peculiarities³¹ - the value in the study of early Irish liturgy is precisely because Early Christian Ireland was part of the liturgical mainstream. Furthermore, as more liturgical sources are available from Early Christian Ireland than most other parts of Western Europe in the Early Middle Ages, this makes the study of early Irish liturgy profitable not only for what it can teach us about Early Christian Ireland but also for what we can learn about the liturgy of Western Europe in general in the Early Middle Ages. This edition of *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* also includes a reproduction of two related works: an edition of the *Stowe Missal* prepared by the Rev. Dr. Bartholomew MacCarthy and "The *Lebar Brecc* Tractate on the Consecration of a Church," an Old Irish liturgical text edited and translated by Whitley Stokes and until now only available in an obscure Italian *festschrift* edition from the turn of the last century. These complementary texts were selected according to the simple criteria that during my initial research into the field of early Irish liturgy they were among the hardest materials to find.

The Rev. Dr. MacCarthy (1843–1904) was a Roman Catholic priest of the diocese of Cloyne in the south of Ireland and was one of the foremost scholars of Early Christian Ireland of his generation. While his views on the early Irish methods of calculation of Easter and of early Christian and insular chronology in general are also very important, his edition of the *Stowe Missal* is perhaps his most significant work. Today most scholars use the more widely available edition of the *Stowe Missal*

³⁰ Particular mention must be made of the corpus of Irish eucharistic vessels which has been minutely studied by Michael Ryan, see *Early Irish Communion Vessels*, The Irish Treasures Series (Dublin: Country House, Dublin, in association with The National Museum of Ireland, 2000) and *Studies in Early Irish Metalwork* (London: The Pindar Press, 2002). Ryan provides an analysis more thorough than any similar treatment of the Continental material so that it is difficult to compare the Irish vessels with the less-studied Continental examples.

³¹ As was the case in every other region, early Irish liturgy did exhibit some peculiarities such as the use of chrismals whereby individual priests carried a consecrated host on their person in a type of portable reliquary. It is also possible that some aspects of liturgical spirituality and practice that were later to become part of the high medieval liturgical synthesis were present in Ireland before they became widespread in the rest of the West. These would include the multiplication of Masses and private Masses, and the importance given to the words of institution and devotion to the Blood of Christ.

edited by Warner as the basis of their study.³² While Warner's edition remains very valuable and may be more accessible (and includes a facsimile of the manuscript itself), the earlier edition by MacCarthy has been by no means superceded. In terms of textual reconstruction MacCarthy is sometimes more accurate than Warner. In addition to providing a critical edition of the text of the *Stowe Missal* he also supplies material on the *Old Irish Mass Tract of the Stowe Missal*. This allegorical tract on the meaning of the Mass is very important as it gives us a window into how Christians of the time understood the Eucharist. Given that the *Stowe Missal* is not a lavish manuscript for use in the great church of a cathedral or major monastic center, the Mass tract was probably used for the preparation of sermons or the formation of priests. As the tract is in Old Irish, MacCarthy helpfully provides us with an English translation of the work. A variation of this tract also occurs in the *Leabhar Breac*³³ and MacCarthy supplies the text of this variation.³⁴ The fact that we possess two separate witnesses to this tract would tend to suggest that the tract enjoyed some popularity, and it is our hope that the fact that both are provided here will lead to a renewed appreciation of this important document.

Whitley Stokes (1830–1910) was a contemporary of MacCarthy, but was a barrister by profession. He spent twenty years in India playing a very active role in the codification of the Indian law system. Besides his professional activities, he had a great interest in philology and Celtic studies, publishing nine books on Celtic studies while living in India, and was seen as one of the best philologists of his day and the world expert on Celtic studies. While not considered to be his most important work, Stokes' edition of the Tractate on the Consecration of a Church from the *Leabhar Breac* is a very important publication from our point of view as it provides us with the only early Irish text of this ritual.

³² George F. Warner, ed., *The Stowe Missal: MS. D.II.3 in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin* (Suffolk: The Henry Bradshaw Society/The Boydell Press, originally published as two volumes in 1906 (vol. 1) and 1915 (vol. 2); reprinted in one volume 1989).

³³ This important manuscript is now in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin (R.I.A. MS 23 P 16: Cat. No. 1230) and dates from the early fifteenth century, although it copies earlier material. This same manuscript also contains the Tractate on the Consecration of a Church which Stokes edited, albeit with a variation in the spelling of the name of the manuscript due to transliteration styles.

³⁴ Pádraig Ó Néill compares the two versions on a linguistic level in "The Old-Irish Tract on the Mass in the Stowe Missal: Some Observances on its Origin and Textual History," in Alfred P. Smyth, ed., *Seanchas: Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 199–204. I deal with the significance more in depth in, *The Eucharist in Pre-Norman Ireland* (forthcoming).

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography is not meant to be exhaustive, and does not fully duplicate the works referred to in the introduction. A more complete bibliography may be found in my forthcoming *The Eucharist in Pre-Norman Ireland*. Here the main aim is to point those who wish to study early Irish liturgy in the right direction. Sometimes it seems that modern historians have made great advances in understanding the early Middle Ages but lack the most basic liturgical knowledge, while liturgists write without profiting from the advances in the historical disciplines. Recent years have witnessed a prolific output of critical editions of original texts and important studies of the Early Christian period of Irish history, and much valuable material has been produced, but again there seems to be an almost unconscious hesitation to explicitly incorporate the liturgical dimension into these studies.

1. History of the Liturgy

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These two series provide comprehensive overviews of the discipline of Liturgical Studies.

Wainwright, Geoffrey and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Basurko, Xavier. *Historia de la Liturgia*. Biblioteca Litúrgica Vol. 28 (Barcelona: Centre de Pastoral Litúrgica, 2006).

Wainwright and Westerfield Tucker provide the most up-to-date history of the liturgy in English. As in all multi-author volumes some entries are more valuable than others, but generally it is a good starting point for an introduction to the history of the liturgy. Basurko provides a good counterbalance to the *Oxford History of Christian Worship* from a more Roman Catholic point of view.

Bradshaw, Paul F. *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 2002).

Bradshaw has made an important contribution to the study of early Christian liturgy. While the volume deals with the beginnings of Christian liturgy and does not tackle the Middle Ages, it provides a useful background and methodology.

Jungmann, Joseph A. *The Mass of the Roman Rite: its Origins and Development (Missarum Solemnia)*. Francis A. Brunner, trans. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1951).

This is the classic history of the Roman Mass, written under very difficult circumstances during World War II. It forms the basis of most modern treatments of the Eucharist in the West.

Foley, Edward. *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2009).

Mazza, Enrico. *La Celebrazione Eucaristica: Genesi del Rito e Sviluppo dell'Interpretazione* (Bologna: EDB, 2003).

In the study of liturgy it is very important to go beyond the ritual texts. The texts of the Eucharist have remained very stable over the centuries; the major changes have been in how Christians have understood them and these works greatly help us to appreciate the historical development of the meaning given to the liturgical rites.

Baldovin, John F. *The Urban Character of Early Christian Worship: the Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy* (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute Press, 1987).

Early Medieval liturgy had a stational dimension (i.e. it often involved physical movement outside the church building) that is absent in most Christian liturgies today. Baldovin introduces modern readers to this concept.

Palazzo, Éric. *A History of Liturgical Books: from the Beginning to the Thirteenth Century*. Madeleine Beaumont, trans. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

Vogel, Cyrille. *Medieval Liturgy: an Introduction to the Sources*. Revised and Translated by William Storey and Niels Rasmussen (Portland, OR: The Pastoral Press, 1986).

These are the basic handbooks to the study of medieval liturgy and deal with the different liturgical forms and manuscripts of the time.

Taft, Robert F. *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: the Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press: 1993).

_____. *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale Press, 1997).

Taft is perhaps the best liturgical scholar active today. Although he specializes in Byzantine liturgy, his work often provides a voice of reason in this complicated field. His work on the Divine Office is the best introduction to the subject presently available.

2. General Historical Background:

Brown, Peter. *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

Brown's study is a very good starting point for a view of the world of Late Antiquity and the world which gave birth to the liturgical texts that Warren presents in his collection.

Wickham, Chris. *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Wickham provides a very valuable analysis of the Middle Ages. This book is quite heavy and not for the casual reader, and while not as specific to the British Isles as Brown's *Rise of Western Christendom*, a careful reading will provide a good understanding of the early medieval world and a very good synthesis of contemporary historical research in this field that has developed so much recently.

Fletcher, Richard. *The Barbarian Conversion: from Paganism to Christianity* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997).

Murphy, G. Roland. *The Saxon Savior: the Transformation of the Gospel in the Ninth-Century Heliand* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Russell, James C. *The Germanization of Early Medieval Christianity: a Sociohistorical Approach to Religious Transformation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Conversion of a society to Christianity is not an easy process. It is gradual and often intertwined with political and social considerations. Christianity may take a few generations to penetrate a culture and all too often modern scholars fall into the extreme positions of either thinking that the adoption of Christianity is complete for every member of a given society, or that Christianity is of little real importance for the individual members of society who basically continued living as before, albeit with a new Christian veneer. Fletcher's work provides the reader with a nuanced understanding of the complicated process of the conversion of the non-Roman peoples of Europe. Murphy and Russell concentrate on the "Germanization" of Christianity, while this does not directly relate to Ireland or Britain they are helpful in understanding the analogous process which happened in Ireland and Britain. While these regional nuances did not change the heart of Christianity they stressed elements of the Christian worldview which all contributed to the Christianity of the High Middle Ages and the Western synthesis.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)*. The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978).

Pelikan provides a good introduction to the theological background that underlies so many of the concerns of early medieval liturgy.

3. Early Christian Ireland and Britain:

Ó Cróinín, Dáibhí, ed. *A New History of Ireland I: Prehistoric and Early Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

In general this is a good introduction to the history of early Ireland. However, this particular volume of the series was plagued by extremely long delays. This means that some of the articles were written decades before the volume was published. For example, Kathleen Hughes wrote her contributions in 1974, 31 years before this volume was released. Other articles such as those by Hilary Richardson, Nancy Edwards, Roger Stalley and Ann Buckley are very valuable (these deal with art, archaeology, architecture and music). But the overall narrative is quite out of date and the modern student will have an incomplete narrative on which to "hang" the newer supplemental articles.

Charles-Edwards, Thomas M. *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

———. "Beyond Empire II: Christianities of the Celtic Peoples." In Thomas F. X. Noble and Julia M. H. Smith, eds. *Early Medieval Christianities, c.600–c.1000*. Cambridge History of Christianity Vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 86–106.

Etchingham, Colmán. *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, Co. Kildare: Laigin Publications, 1999).

Stafford, Pauline. *A Companion to the Early Middle Ages: Britain and Ireland c.500–1100*. Blackwell Companions to British History (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

These works provide a much better central historical narrative of Early Christian Ireland than that of Ó Cróinín.

Thomas, Charles. *Christianity in Roman Britain to AD 500* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1981).

Blair, John, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Good introductions to the Church in Britain in the Early Middle Ages.

Clarke, H. B. and Mary Brennan, eds. *Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism* (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports International Series, 1981).

Herbert, Máire. *Iona, Kells and Derry: the History and Hagiography of the Familia of Columba* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1988).

While the monastic element was not as dominant in Ireland as was once thought, it was nonetheless an important dimension of the early Irish Church. These studies provide an introduction to a modern understanding of this phenomenon.

Godel, Willibrord. “Irish Prayer in the Early Middle Ages” in *Milltown Studies* 4, (1979): 60–99; 5 (1980): 72–114; 6 (1980): 84–104; 7 (1981): 21–51; 8 (1981): 75–96 and 9 (1982): 38–57.

Ward, Benedicta. *High King of Heaven: Aspects of Early English Spirituality*. Cistercian Studies Series Vol. 181 (Kalamazoo, MI, Cistercian Publications, 1999).

Most books on Celtic Spirituality are not worth the paper they are printed on, these are two rare exceptions. Godel, in particular, makes a lot of use of the liturgical texts of the period.

Herren, Michael W. and Shirley Ann Brown. *Christ in Celtic Christianity: Britain and Ireland from the Fifth to the Tenth Century* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2002).

O’Loughlin, Thomas. *Celtic Theology: Humanity, Word and God in Early Irish Writings* (London and New York: Continuum: 2000).

While I do not agree with all of the findings of these works they are a good starting point for studying the inculturation of Christianity in Ireland and Britain.

4. Primary Sources

Undoubtedly the most important academic development since Warren published his *Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church* has been the publication of numerous editions and translations of material from Early Christian Ireland and Britain. The following list, while not complete, touches upon most published texts that relate to early Irish liturgy.

Atkinson, R., trans. and ed. *The Passions and Homilies from the Leabhar Breac*. Todd Lecture Series 2 (Dublin, 1887).

Bernard, J. H. and R. Atkinson, eds. *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*. 2 Vols. Henry Bradshaw Society 13 and 14 (London: Harrison & Sons, 1898).

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- , ed. *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*. With a contribution by Fergus Kelly. *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* Vol. 10 (Dublin: School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979).
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- Curran, Michael. *The Antiphony of Bangor* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1984).
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- Fleming, John. *Gille of Limerick (c. 1070–1145): Architect of a Medieval Church* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001).
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- Greenwell, William, trans. and ed. *The Pontifical of Egbert, Archbishop of York, AD 732–766*. The Publications of the Surtees Society Vol. 28 (London: The Surtees Society, 1854).
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- Lawlor, Hugh Jackson, ed. *The Roslyn Missal: An Irish Manuscript in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1899).
- McNeill, John T. and Helena M. Gamer, trans. and eds. *Medieval Handbooks of Penance: a Translation of the Principle Libri Poenitentiales*. Records of Western Civilization Series Vol. 29 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
- Ó Maidín, Unseann, trans. and ed. *The Celtic Monk: Rules and Writings of Early Irish Monks*. Cistercian Studies Series Vol. 162 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1996).
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- Walker, G. S. M., trans. and ed. *Sancti Columbani Opera*. Scriptores Latini Hiberniae Vol. 2 (Dublin: School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1957).
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6. Art and Architecture

These fields of study, which have developed greatly in recent years, provide an important counterbalance to earlier studies which tend to over-emphasize the textual dimension of liturgy.

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[25]

Qualis fuerit apud Britones et Hibernos sacrificandi ritus non plane compertum est. Modum tamen illum a Romano divisum exstitisse intelligitur ex Bernardo in libro de vita Malachiae ec. iii, viii, ubi Malachias barbaras consuetudines Romanis mutasse, et canonicum divinae laudis officium in illas ecclesias invexisse memoratur.

Mabillon, De Lit. Gall. lib. i. cap. ii. § 14.

Hactenus lyurgia Scottica typis vulgata non habetur; et Britanniae virorum doctorem esset, fragmenta ritus Scottici, circumquaque dispersa, colligere et illustrare.

C. Purton Cooper's (intended) Report on Focdera, Appendix A, p. 94.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain an account of the Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church in these islands, so far as their character can be ascertained from the limited sources of information open to us. They relate to a subject about which, until recently, very little was known. The great continental Liturgiologists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were either silent about it, or dismissed it as offering no data for information and no materials for investigation. Mabillon wrote: 'Qualis fuerit apud Britonos et Hibernos sacrificandi ritus, non plane compertum est. Modum tamen illum a Romano diversum exstitisse intelligitur ex Bernardo in libro de vita Malachiae, capitibus iii et viii, ubi Malachias barbaras consuetudines Romanis mutasse, et canonicum divinae laudis officium in illas ecclesias invexisse memoratur.'—*De Liturgia Gallicana*, lib. i. c. ii. § 14. Gerbert wrote: 'In dubio est qui et qualis antiquitus ea in orbis plaga fuerit ordo operis Dei.'—*Lit. Aleman.* i. 76.

In more recent times Dr. Lingard has disclaimed all possibility of any knowledge of the subject: 'Whether the sacrificial service of the Scottish missionaries varied from that of the Romans we have no means of judging.'—*Anglo-Saxon Church*, edit. 1858, vol. i. p. 271.

Sir W. Palmer in his *Origines Liturgicae* (i. 176–189) devoted one short chapter to the Liturgy of the Celtic Church, which consisted largely of guesses and of the repetition at secondhand of statements which he was unable to verify, but which, were he to write now, he would either

abandon or modify. Within the last few years extensive additions have been made to the scanty materials available to Sir W. Palmer in 1839, in some instances by the discovery, in other instances by the publication for the first time, of various ancient Irish and Scottish liturgical fragments; by the printing of certain important Celtic manuscripts; by the collection in palæographical and archæological volumes of the representations in Celtic illuminated MSS.; by the examination of architectural remains, and of stonework inscriptions and designs.

The sources from which the information contained in the present volume has been drawn are chiefly the following:

(a) Scattered notices in the works of contemporary writers; viz. fifth century, Fastidius, Patricius, Secundinus; sixth century, Columba, Fiacc, Gildas; seventh century, Cuminus Albus, Adamnanus, Columbanus. Bachiarius and Sedulius are omitted from this list, in consequence of the uncertainty attaching to their date and nationality. Non-Celtic authors, e.g. Aleuin, Bede, Bernard of Clairvaux, Jonas, Walafrid Strabo, &c., have been frequently referred to.

(b) Scattered notices in Celtic MSS., viz. *Catalogus Sanctorum Hiberniae*, *Leabhar Breac*, *Sinodus Hibernensis*, *Senchus Mor*, &c.

(c) Fragments of the ancient Celtic Liturgy surviving in the Stowe (ninth century), Drummond (eleventh century), and Corpus (twelfth century) Irish Missals; in the Books of Mulling (seventh century), Dimma (seventh century), Deer (ninth century), Armagh (ninth century); in Irish MSS. on the Continent, Nos. 1394 and 1395 (ninth century) at St. Gall, and the *Antiphonarium Benchorensis* (eighth century) at Milan, and in a few other MSS. enumerated in Chapter iii.

(d) Illuminations in Celtic manuscripts, which have lately become accessible to the untravelled student in the magnifi-

cent volumes of Professor Westwood, Mr. Gilbert, and the late Dr. Todd.

(*e*) Architectural remains of churches, sepulchral inscriptions, sculptured crosses, carved or engraved book-covers, caskets, pastoral staves, bells, chalices, spoons, and other ecclesiastical relics.

In drawing information from such various quarters the author can hardly hope to have escaped all errors of detail, and not to have hazarded some conjectures which will be criticised, and to have drawn some conclusions which will be disputed.

A certain element of incompleteness is still inevitable in the treatment of this subject from the state of a part of the material from which our knowledge is derived. Some important Irish manuscripts, as the Stowe Missal, &c., have never been published; others, as the *Leabhar Breac*, &c., have been published in facsimile, without note or comment, and need the editorial explanations of some one who is at once an antiquarian, an ecclesiastical historian, and a palæographer, in order to assign their date and value to the historical, ecclesiastical, and liturgical tracts of which they are composed¹. There is a vast amount of unsifted and undated, or erroneously dated, material preserved in various collections, especially in the Bollandists' edition of the *Acta Sanctorum*. Much of it might be useful for illustration in matters of detail, even where it could in no sense be relied upon as historical. But until some discriminating hagiologist shall have undertaken the laborious task of visiting the various European libraries, and critically examining the original MSS. from which such Lives are drawn, and publishing the

¹ Since this sentence was written one of the most important of these documents, the *Félire of Oengus*, has been edited by Mr. Whitley Stokes, with a translation and complete apparatus criticus. *Transactions of R. I. A.*, June, 1880.

result of such investigations, they must be regarded as more likely to mislead than to inform. Occasional reference has been made to a very few of these biographies, viz. those of Cogitosus, Ultan, St. Evin, &c., which have been passed and repassed through the crucible of modern criticism, and the evidential value of which it has therefore been possible approximately to ascertain. The general importance of this hagiologic literature has been discussed by the late Sir Thomas Duffus Hardy, in his Preface to the *Rerum Britannicarum mediæ ævi Scriptores* (pp. 18–20), a work which includes a dated catalogue of all the MS. material accessible in Great Britain; and, so far as Ireland and Scotland are concerned, by Mr. Skene (*Celtic Scotland*, ii. cap. x, and *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, Preface). Its value for liturgical illustration is diminished by the fact that it all belongs to a period subsequent to the conformity of the Celtic Church to the Church of Rome. This appears plainly on the face of such unhistorical passages as the following in Ultan's Life of St. Bridget. The author thus describes her dream and consequent action: 'In urbe Romana juxta corpora Petri et Pauli audiui missas; et nimis desidero ut ad me istius ordo et universa regula feratur a Roma. Tunc misit Brigida viros sapientes et detulerunt inde missas et regulam.'—Cap. 91. The introduction of the Roman Liturgy into the Irish Church is antedated in this passage by many centuries. Its historical value is equal to that of the next chapter, which describes St. Bridget hanging her clothes to dry on a sunbeam.

A part of Chapter ii has previously appeared in the form of an article in the *Church Quarterly Review* (vol. x. p. 50), and a part of Chapter iii in letters to the Editor of the *Academy*.

Latin authorities have been frequently quoted *in extenso*.

Gaelic authorities have merely been referred to. Long passages in the ancient dialects of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales would have added considerably to the bulk of the volume, and would have been unintelligible to the majority of readers.

The retention of an original orthography will explain the occasional occurrence of such forms as 'sinodus,' 'imnus,' 'cremen,' &c., for 'synodus,' 'hymnus,' 'crimen,' &c. The retention of a popular nomenclature will account for such forms as Charlemagne, Iona, &c., instead of Karl the Great, Hi, &c.

It would not be possible to compile such a volume as the present one without being largely beholden to the labours of other writers. The source of information has been generally indicated in foot-notes, but in case of accidental omission the author begs once for all to express his indebtedness to such recently deceased writers as Dr. Todd, Mr. Haddan, and Bishop Forbes, and to such living writers as Professor Stubbs, Mr. Skene, and Dr. Reeves, from whose edition of Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, as from a rich quarry, a knowledge of many facts recorded in this volume has been obtained. It is doubtful whether in the annals of literature so much important information has ever before been so lavishly accumulated and so skilfully arranged within a few hundred pages, or whether any other editorial task has ever been more thoroughly executed.

The author also begs to express his thanks to the Earl of Ashburnham for his kind permission to inspect and copy out the liturgical portion of the MS. volume known as the *Stowe Missal*, and to Professor Rhys, Mr. Whitley Stokes, Professor Westwood, and Mr. Henry Bradshaw for their kindly-afforded assistance in linguistic and palæographical questions respectively.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. Extent and Duration of the Celtic Church. — § 2. Its Monastic and Missionary Character. — § 3. Its Orthodoxy. — § 4. Its Independence of Rome. — § 5. Eastern connection. — § 6. Gallican connection. — § 7. Spanish connection. — § 8. Points of difference between Celtic and Roman Churches.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

It would be alien to the purpose with which this volume is written, and impossible within the limits which it is intended to assume, to present to the reader a complete history of the 'Celtic Church;' but it is necessary to define at the outset what is meant by that term, and it will be advantageous to add to this definition a notice of such of its more important features and general characteristics as have an *a priori* bearing on the probable *genus* of its Liturgy and Ritual, which will then be described with as much detail as the nature of the subject-matter and the amount of evidence at our disposal render possible.

§ 1. EXTENT AND DURATION OF THE CELTIC CHURCH.—By the term 'Celtic Church' is meant the Church which existed in Great Britain and Ireland (with certain continental offshoots) before the mission of St. Augustine, and to a varying extent after that event, until by absorption or submission the various parts of it were at different dates incorporated with the Church of the Anglo-Saxons¹.

Central England.—The Celtic Church in Central England became extinct at the close of the fifth century, its members being then either exterminated in war, or retiring to the

¹ The Scoti and Britones are often mentioned together, as in the letter of the first Anglo-Saxon Bishops preserved by Bede (H. E. lib. ii. c. 4); in the Penitential of Theodore, cap. ix. § 1. See p. 9. n. 2, p. 28. n. 6.

remoter parts of the country for shelter from the attacks of heathen invaders from Jutland, Sleswick, and Holstein. In those more distant quarters the ancient national Church maintained a separate existence and a corporate continuity long after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons which was begun by the Roman mission under the leadership of St. Augustine.

Wales.—The Britons of North Wales did not conform to the usages of the Anglo-Saxon Church till A.D. 768, those of South Wales not till A.D. 777. The supremacy of the See of Canterbury was not fully established here till the twelfth century.

Southern England.—The British Church in Somerset and Devon, or to speak more exactly the British population dwelling within the territory conquered by the West-Saxons, conformed at the beginning of the eighth century, through the influence of Aldhelm, who became Abbot of Malmesbury A.D. 671, Bishop of Sherborne A.D. 705¹.

In Cornwall the Bishops of the British Church were not subject to the See of Canterbury before the time of King Athelstan (925-940), the submission of Bishop Kenstec to Archbishop Ceolnoth (833-70) being the only exception. On the conquest of Cornwall by the Saxons the British Bishop Conan submitted to Archbishop Wulfhelm, and was recognised by King Athelstan, who formally nominated him to the Cornish See of Bodmin A.D. 936².

Northumberland.—The Celtic Church, established in Northumberland by King Oswald A.D. 634-5, after having flourished thirty years under the Scottish bishops Aidan, Finan, and Colman, successively, conformed to the Roman practice at the Synod of Whitby A.D. 664; when Colman, who had throughout unsuccessfully opposed the change, 'perceiving that his doctrine was rejected and his sect despised, took with him such as were willing to follow him, and would not comply with the Catholic Easter and coronal tonsure,—for there was much

¹ Bede, H. E. v. 18.

² H. and S. i. 676.

controversy about that also,—and went back into Scotia, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case¹.’

Strathclyde.—The Britons of Strathclyde conformed A.D. 688, the year after the death of St. Cuthbert, on the occasion of a visit among them of Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, who himself had been persuaded about this time to adopt the new policy. Sedulius, the first British Bishop of Strathclyde who conformed to Roman usage, is mentioned as present at a council held at Rome under Gregory II, A.D. 721².

Scotland.—Adamnan attempted to force the Scottish Church to conform to Roman usage at the close of the seventh century, after his return from his second mission to King Aldfrith in Northumbria A.D. 688, but unsuccessfully. His action is thus recorded by Bede:—

‘Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks who were in the isle of Hii, was sent ambassador by his nation to Aldfrith, King of the Angles, where, having made some stay, he observed the canonical rites of the Church, and was earnestly admonished by many who were more learned than himself, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church in relation to either the observance of Easter or any other decrees whatsoever, considering the small number of his followers seated at so distant a corner of the world. In consequence of this he changed his mind, and readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the Churches of the Angles to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man and remarkably learned in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Accordingly returning home he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he himself had learned and embraced with all his heart, but in this he could not prevail³.’

¹ Bede, H. E. iii. 25.

² ‘Sedulius, episcopus Britanniae, de genere Scottorum, huic constituto a nobis promulgato subscripsi.’ H. and S. ii. 7, with note.

³ Bede, H. E. v. 15.

After the death of Adamnan, A.D. 704, there were two parties in this controversy, which was eventually settled in favour of the Roman rule by a decree of Nectan, King of the Picts, A.D. 710. 'Not long after which,' says Bede, 'those monks also of the Scottish nation who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were, by the procurement of our Lord, brought to the canonical observance of Easter and the right mode of tonsure. For in the year after the incarnation of our Lord A.D. 716, the father and priest Ecgberet, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, coming to them from Ireland was very honourably and joyfully received by them . . . and by his pious and frequent exhortations he converted them from the inveterate tradition of their ancestors. He taught them to perform the principal solemnity after the Catholic and Apostolic manner. The monks of Hii by the instruction of Ecgberet adopted the Catholic rites, under Abbot Dunchad (A.D. 710-717), about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the nation of the Angles¹.'

But the acceptance of the Paschal rule at Hii in 716 did not settle the practice of that Church finally, for we are informed that the Easter-tide of Ecgberet's death (A.D. 729) was the first Easter celebrated according to the Roman calculation². A schism had taken place at Iona A.D. 704, and rival abbots existed till A.D. 772, when on the death of the Abbot Suibhne the conformity of the whole monastery of Iona to the Roman Church may be considered to have been established³. But this remark does not apply to the whole of Scotland. Customs and ritual peculiar to the ancient Church of the country existed long after the

¹ Bede, H. E. v. 22.

² Ib. 'Cum eo die (i.e. viii. Kal. Maii) Pascha celebraretur, quo nunquam prius in eis locis celebrari solebat.' In 716 the Columban monks were banished from the territories of Nectan, king of the Picts, in consequence of their refusal to comply with a royal edict commanding the adoption of the Roman Paschal cycle and coronal tonsure. *Annals of Ulster*.

³ Skene, W. F., *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 288.

eighth century. When St. Margaret, a Saxon Princess, married King Malcolm III, A.D. 1069, she promoted a religious reformation, which is said to have included the abolition of the following four Scottish customs:—

1. The commencement of Lent on the first Monday in Lent instead of on Ash Wednesday. This is the custom at Milan to the present day. It may perhaps be traced in the Sarum direction to cover up all crosses, &c. on the first Monday in Lent.

2. The non-reception of the Holy Eucharist on Easter Day. It is difficult to understand this statement, because Easter Day in the early Scottish Church was 'the festival of joy¹,' and the Easter Communion was especially singled out for mention². In the early Irish Church it was enjoined on all the faithful by one of the canons attributed to St. Patrick³. A King of Leinster is said to have paid a visit to St. Bridget, in order to listen to preaching and celebration on Easter Day⁴.

3. Labour on the Lord's Day.

4. Strange customs in the Mass.

St. Margaret's biographer tells us that 'in some places among the Scots there were persons who, contrary to the custom of the whole Church, had been accustomed to celebrate Masses by some barbarous rite, which the Queen, kindled with God's zeal, so laboured to destroy and bring to nothing, that thenceforth there appeared no one in the whole race of the Scots who dared to do such a thing⁵.'

¹ 'Laetitiae festivitas.' Adamnan, Vit. S. Columbae, iii. 23.

² 'Ut in Paschali solemnitate ad altarium accedas, et Eucharistiam sumas. . . . Et post peractam Paschae sollemnitatem in qua jussus ad altare accessit.' Ibid. ii. 39.

³ 'Maxime autem in nocte Paschae, in qua qui non communicat, fidelis non est.' Can. S. Patricii, Secundae Sinodi, xxii.

⁴ Leabhar Breac, fol. 64a.

⁵ 'Praeterea in aliquibus locis Scottorum quidam fuerunt, qui contra totius Ecclesiae consuetudinem, nescio quo ritu barbaro, missas celebrare consueverant; quod regina, zelo Dei accensa, ita destrui atque annihilare studuit, ut deinceps qui tale quid praesumeret, nemo in tota Scottorum gente appareret.' Theoderic, Vit. S. Margaret. cc. 8 sq.; H. and S. ii. i. 158.

In the absence of any direct statement as to what these liturgical peculiarities were, we are left to conjecture either that they were connected with the celebration of Mass in the vernacular instead of in the Latin language¹, or, with more probability², that up to the eleventh century the Ephesine and the Roman Liturgies were used contemporaneously in Scotland, somewhat in the same way that in France a transition period can be traced through such service books as the '*Sacramentarium Gallicanum*,' in which Ephesine and Petrine forms present themselves alternately. The above charges also indicate that the final extinction of the old Celtic Church in Scotland was partly owing to internal decay, as well as to the line of policy adopted by Queen Margaret and Malcolm Canmore, which was the same as that adopted in the next century by the Anglo-Norman kings towards Ireland. Neither a national Church nor a religious movement can be easily extinguished by royal authority, unless there are other and co-operating influences at work. St. Margaret was not immediately successful in her attempts at suppression. Fifty years later, in the reign of King David, we learn that the Culdees 'in a corner of their church which was very small used to celebrate their own office after their own fashion³.' It is the last spark in the expiring embers of the controversy and the struggle for supremacy between two elements in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland; the old national Celtic element represented by

¹ This is Mr. Skene's view, who lays stress on the words '*barbaro ritu*.' His words are: 'It is not explained in what this peculiarity existed, but it was something done after a barbarous manner, so that it is impossible to tell how it (Mass) was celebrated, and it was entirely suppressed. This is hardly applicable to the mere introduction of some peculiar forms or ceremonies, and the most probable explanation of these expressions is that in the remote and mountainous districts the service was performed in the native language and not in Latin, as was the custom of the universal Church.' *Celtic Scotland*, ii. 349.

² This is Bishop Forbes' view. *Missale de Arbutnot*, Preface, lv.

³ '*Keledei enim in angulo quodam ecclesiae, quae modica nimis erat, suum officium more suo celebrabant*.' *Chron. Picts and Scots*, p. 190, edited by W. F. Skene; Edinb. 1867.